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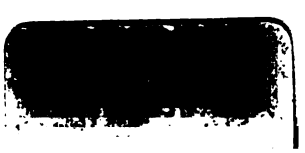

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George Washington

# AMERICAN IDEALS

AND

OTHER ESSAYS, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL

By

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

VOLUME I.

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TO

HENRY CABOT LODGE

*October, 1897*

# PREFACE

IT is not difficult to be virtuous in a cloistered and negative way. Neither is it difficult to succeed, after a fashion, in active life, if one is content to disregard the considerations which bind honorable and upright men. But it is by no means easy to combine honesty and efficiency; and yet it is absolutely necessary in order to do any work really worth doing. It is not hard, while sitting in one's study, to devise admirable plans for the betterment of politics and of social conditions; but in practice it too often proves very hard to make any such plan work at all, no matter how imperfectly. Yet the effort must continually be made, under penalty of constant retrogression in our political life.

No one quality or one virtue is enough to insure success; vigor, honesty, common sense,—all are needed. The practical man is merely rendered more noxious by his practical ability if he employs it wrongly, whether from ignorance or from lack of morality; while the doctrinaire, the man of theories, whether written or spoken, is useless if he cannot also act.

These essays are written on behalf of the many

men who do take an actual part in trying practically to bring about the conditions for which we somewhat vaguely hope; on behalf of the under-officers in that army which, with much stumbling, halting, and slipping, many mistakes and short-comings, and many painful failures, does, nevertheless, through weary strife, accomplish something toward raising the standard of public life.

We feel that the doer is better than the critic and that the man who strives stands far above the man who stands aloof, whether he thus stands aloof because of pessimism or because of sheer weakness. To borrow a simile from the football field, we believe that men must play fair, but that there must be no shirking, and that success can only come to the player who "hits the line hard."

Theodore Roosevelt

SAGAMORE HILL, *October, 1897.*

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# AMERICAN IDEALS

## CHAPTER I

### AMERICAN IDEALS [1]

IN his noteworthy book on *National Life and Character*, Mr. Pearson says: "The countrymen of Chatham and Wellington, of Washington and Lincoln, in short, the citizens of every historic state, are richer by great deeds that have formed the national character, by winged words that have passed into current speech, by the examples of lives and labors consecrated to the service of the commonwealth." In other words, every great nation owes to the men whose lives have formed part of its greatness not merely the material effect of what they did, not merely the laws they placed upon the statute books or the victories they won over armed foes, but also the immense but indefinable moral influence produced by their deeds and words themselves upon the national character. It would be difficult to exaggerate the material effects of the careers of

[1] *The Forum*, February, 1895.

Washington and of Lincoln upon the United States. Without Washington we should probably never have won our independence of the British Crown, and we should almost certainly have failed to become a great nation, remaining instead a cluster of jangling little communities, drifting toward the type of government prevalent in Spanish America. Without Lincoln we might perhaps have failed to keep the political unity we had won; and even if, as is possible, we had kept it, both the struggle by which it was kept and the results of this struggle would have been so different that the effect upon our national history could not have failed to be profound. Yet the nation's debt to these men is not confined to what it owes them for its material well-being, incalculable though this debt is. Beyond the fact that we are an independent and united people, with half a continent as our heritage, lies the fact that every American is richer by the heritage of the noble deeds and noble words of Washington and of Lincoln. Each of us who reads the Gettysburg speech or the second inaugural address of the greatest American of the nineteenth century, or who studies the long campaigns and lofty statesmanship of that other American who was even greater, cannot but feel within him that lift toward things higher and nobler which can never be bestowed by the enjoyment of mere material prosperity.

It is not only the country which these men helped to make and helped to save that is ours by inheritance; we inherit also all that is best and highest in their characters and in their lives. We inherit from Lincoln and from the might of Lincoln's generation not merely the freedom of those who once were slaves, for we inherit also the fact of the freeing of them; we inherit the glory and the honor and the wonder of the deed that was done, no less than the actual results of the deed when done. The bells that rang at the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation still ring in Whittier's ode; and as men think over the real nature of the triumph then scored for humankind their hearts shall ever throb as they cannot over the greatest industrial success or over any victory won at a less cost than ours.

The captains and the armies who, after long years of dreary campaigning and bloody, stubborn fighting, brought to a close the Civil War have likewise left us even more than a reunited realm. The material effect of what they did is shown in the fact that the same flag flies from the Great Lakes to the Rio Grande, and all the people of the United States are richer because they are one people and not many, because they belong to one great nation and not to a contemptible knot of struggling nationalities. But besides this, besides the material results of the Civil War, we are all,

North and South, incalculably richer for its memories. We are the richer for each grim campaign, for each hard-fought battle. We are the richer for valor displayed alike by those who fought so valiantly for the right and by those who, no less valiantly, fought for what they deemed the right. We have in us nobler capacities for what is great and good because of the infinite woe and suffering, and because of the splendid ultimate triumph.

In the same way that we are the better for the deeds of our mighty men who have served the nation well, so we are the worse for the deeds and the words of those who have striven to bring evil on the land. Most fortunately we have been free from the peril of the most dangerous of all examples. We have not had to fight the influence exerted over the minds of eager and ambitious men by the career of the military adventurer who heads some successful revolutionary or separatist movement. No man works such incalculable woe to a free country as he who teaches young men that one of the paths to glory, renown, and temporal success lies along the line of armed resistance to the Government, of its attempted overthrow.

Yet if we are free from the peril of this example, there are other perils from which we are not free. All through our career we have had to war against a tendency to regard, in the individual and the nation alike, as most important, things that are of

comparatively little importance. We rightfully value success, but sometimes we overvalue it, for we tend to forget that success may be obtained by means which should make it abhorred and despised by every honorable man. One section of the community deifies as "smartness" the kind of trickery which enables a man without conscience to succeed in the financial or political world. Another section of the community deifies violent homicidal lawlessness. If ever our people as a whole adopt these views, then we shall have proved that we are unworthy of the heritage our forefathers left us; and our country will go down in ruin.

The people that do harm in the end are not the wrong-doers whom all execrate; they are the men who do not do quite as much wrong, but who are applauded instead of being execrated. The career of Benedict Arnold has done us no harm as a nation because of the universal horror it inspired. The men who have done us harm are those who have advocated disunion, but have done it so that they have been enabled to keep their political position; who have advocated repudiation of debts, or other financial dishonesty, but have kept their standing in the community; who preach the doctrines of anarchy, but refrain from action that will bring them within the pale of the law; for these men lead thousands astray by the fact that

they go unpunished or even rewarded for their misdeeds.

It is unhappily true that we inherit the evil as well as the good done by those who have gone before us, and in the one case as in the other the influence extends far beyond the mere material effects. The foes of order harm quite as much by example as by what they actually accomplish. So it is with the equally dangerous criminals of the wealthy classes. The conscienceless stock speculator who acquires wealth by swindling his fellows, by debauching judges and corrupting legislatures, and who ends his days with the reputation of being among the richest men in America, exerts over the minds of the rising generation an influence worse than that of the average murderer or bandit, because his career is even more dazzling in its success, and even more dangerous in its effects upon the community. Any one who reads the essays of Charles Francis Adams and Henry Adams, entitled *A Chapter of Erie* and *The Gold Conspiracy in New York*, will read about the doings of men whose influence for evil upon the community is more potent than that of any band of anarchists or train robbers.

There are other members of our mercantile community who, being perfectly honest themselves, nevertheless do almost as much damage as the dishonest. The professional labor agitator,

with all his reckless incendiarism of speech, can do no more harm than the narrow, hard, selfish merchant or manufacturer who deliberately sets himself to keep the laborers he employs in a condition of dependence which will render them helpless to combine against him; and every such merchant or manufacturer who rises to suffiicent eminence leaves the record of his name and deeds as a legacy of evil to all who come after him.

But of course the worst foes of America are the foes to that orderly liberty without which our Republic must speedily perish. The reckless labor agitator who arouses the mob to riot and bloodshed is in the last analysis the most dangerous of the workingman's enemies. This man is a real peril; and so is his sympathizer, the legislator who, to catch votes, denounces the judiciary and the military because they put down mobs. We Americans have, on the whole, a right to be optimists; but it is mere folly to blind ourselves to the fact that there are some black clouds on the horizon of our future.

During the summer of 1894 every American capable of thinking must at times have pondered very gravely over certain features of the national character which were brought into unpleasant prominence by the course of events. The demagogue, in all his forms, is as characteristic an evil of a free society as the courtier is of a despotism;

and the attitude of many of our public men at the time of the great strike in July, 1894, was such as to call down on their heads the hearty condemnation of every American who wishes well to his country. It would be difficult to overestimate the damage done by the example and action of a man like Governor Altgeld of Illinois. Whether he is honest or not in his beliefs is not of the slightest consequence. He is as emphatically the foe of decent government as Tweed himself, and is capable of doing far more damage than Tweed. The Governor, who began his career by pardoning anarchists, and whose most noteworthy feat since was his bitter and undignified, but fortunately futile, campaign against the election of the upright judge who sentenced the anarchists, is the foe of every true American and is the foe particularly of every honest workingman. With such a man it was to be expected that he should in time of civic commotion act as the foe of the law-abiding and the friend of the lawless classes, and endeavor, in company with the lowest and most abandoned office-seeking politicians, to prevent proper measures being taken to prevent riot and to punish the rioters. Had it not been for the admirable action of the Federal Government, Chicago would have seen a repetition of what occurred during the Paris Commune, while Illinois would have been torn by a fierce social war; and

for all the horrible waste of life that this would have entailed Governor Altgeld would have been primarily responsible. It was a most fortunate thing that the action at Washington was so quick and so emphatic. Senator Davis of Minnesota set the key of patriotism at the time when men were still puzzled and hesitated. The President and Attorney-General Olney acted with equal wisdom and courage, and the danger was averted. The completeness of the victory of the Federal authorities, representing the cause of law and order, has been perhaps one reason why it was so soon forgotten; and now not a few short-sighted people need to be reminded that when we were on the brink of an almost terrific explosion the Governor of Illinois did his best to work to this country a measure of harm as great as any ever planned by Benedict Arnold, and that we were saved by the resolute action of the Federal judiciary and of the regular army. Moreover, Governor Altgeld, though pre-eminent, did not stand alone on his unenviable prominence. Governor Waite of Colorado stood with him. Most of the Populist governors of the Western States, and the Republican governor of California and the Democratic governor of North Dakota, shared the shame with him; and it makes no difference whether in catering to riotous mobs they paid heed to their own timidity and weakness, or to that spirit of blatant dema-

gogism which, more than any other, jeopardizes the existence of free institutions. On the other hand, the action of the then Governor of Ohio, Mr. McKinley, entitled him to the gratitude of all good citizens.

Every true American, every man who thinks, and who if the occasion comes is ready to act, may do well to ponder upon the evil wrought by the lawlessness of the disorderly classes when once they are able to elect their own chiefs to power. If the government generally got into the hands of men such as Altgeld, the Republic would go to pieces in a year; and it would be right that it should go to pieces, for the election of such men shows that the people electing them are unfit to be entrusted with self-government.

There are, however, plenty of wrong-doers besides those who commit the overt act. Too much cannot be said against the men of wealth who sacrifice everything to getting wealth. There is not in the world a more ignoble character than the mere money-getting American, insensible to every duty, regardless of every principle, bent only on amassing a fortune, and putting his fortune only to the basest uses—whether these uses be to speculate in stocks and wreck railroads himself, or to allow his son to lead a life of foolish and expensive idleness and gross debauchery, or to purchase some scoundrel of high social position, foreign or

native, for his daughter. Such a man is only the more dangerous if he occasionally does some deed like founding a college or endowing a church, which makes those good people who are also foolish forget his real iniquity. These men are equally careless of the workingmen, whom they oppress, and of the State, whose existence they imperil. There are not very many of them, but there is a very great number of men who approach more or less closely to the type, and, just in so far as they do so approach, they are curses to the country. The man who is content to let politics go from bad to worse, jesting at the corruption of politicians, the man who is content to see the maladministration of justice without an immediate and resolute effort to reform it, is shirking his duty and is preparing the way for infinite woe in the future. Hard, brutal indifference to the right, and an equally brutal short-sightedness as to the inevitable results of corruption and injustice, are baleful beyond measure; and yet they are characteristic of a great many Americans who think themselves perfectly respectable, and who are considered thriving, prosperous men by their easy-going fellow-citizens.

Another class, merging into this, and only less dangerous, is that of the men whose ideals are purely material. These are the men who are willing to go for good government when they think it

will pay, but who measure everything by the shop-till, the people who are unable to appreciate any quality that is not a mercantile commodity, who do not understand that a poet may do far more for a country than the owner of a nail factory, who do not realize that no amount of commercial prosperity can supply the lack of the heroic virtues, or can in itself solve the terrible social problems which all the civilized world is now facing. The mere materialist is, above all things, short-sighted. In a recent article Mr. Edward Atkinson casually mentioned that the regular army could now render the country no "effective or useful service." Two months before this sapient remark was printed the regular army had saved Chicago from the fate of Paris in 1870 and had prevented a terrible social war in the West. At the end of this article Mr. Atkinson indulged in a curious rhapsody against the navy, denouncing its existence and being especially wrought up, not because war-vessels take life, but because they "destroy commerce." To men of a certain kind, trade and property are far more sacred than life or honor, of far more consequence than the great thoughts and lofty emotions which alone make a nation mighty. They believe, with a faith almost touching in its utter feebleness, that "the Angel of Peace, draped in a garment of untaxed calico," has given her final message to men when she has implored them

to devote all their energies to producing oleomargarine at a quarter of a cent less a firkin, or to importing woollens for a fraction less than they can be made at home. These solemn prattlers strive after an ideal in which they shall happily unite the imagination of a green-grocer with the heart of a Bengalee baboo. They are utterly incapable of feeling one thrill of generous emotion, or the slightest throb of that pulse which gives to the world statesmen, patriots, warriors, and poets, and which makes a nation other than a cumberer of the world's surface. In the concluding page of his article, Mr. Atkinson, complacently advancing his panacea, his quack cure-all, says that "all evil powers of the world will go down before" a policy of "reciprocity of trade without obstruction"! Fatuity can go no farther.

No Populist who wishes a currency based on corn and cotton stands in more urgent need of applied common sense than does the man who believes that the adoption of any policy, no matter what, in reference to our foreign commerce, will cut that tangled knot of social well-being and misery at which the fingers of the London free-trader clutch as helplessly as those of the Berlin protectionist. Such a man represents individually an almost imponderable element in the work and thought of the community; but in the aggregate he stands for a real danger, because he stands

for a feeling evident of late years among many respectable people. The people who pride themselves upon having a purely commercial ideal are apparently unaware that such an ideal is as essentially mean and sordid as any in the world, and that no bandit community of the Middle Ages can have led a more unlovely life than would be the life of men to whom trade and manufactures were everything, and to whom such words as national honor and glory, as courage and daring, and loyalty and unselfishness, had become meaningless. The merely material, the merely commercial ideal, the ideal of the men "whose fatherland is the till," is in its very essence debasing and lowering. It is as true now as ever it was that no man and no nation shall live by bread alone. Thrift and industry are indispensable virtues; but they are not all-sufficient. We must base our appeals for civic and national betterment on nobler grounds than those of mere business expediency.

We have examples enough and to spare that tend to evil; nevertheless, for our good fortune, the men who have most impressed themselves upon the thought of the nation have left behind them careers the influence of which must tell for good. The unscrupulous speculator who rises to enormous wealth by swindling his neighbor; the capitalist who oppresses the workingman; the agitator who wrongs the workingman yet more

deeply by trying to teach him to rely not upon himself, but partly upon the charity of individuals or of the state and partly upon mob violence; the man in public life who is a demagogue or corrupt, and the newspaper writer who fails to attack him because of his corruption, or who slanderously assails him when he is honest; the political leader who, cursed by some obliquity of moral or of mental vision, seeks to produce sectional or social strife—all these, though important in their day, have hitherto failed to leave any lasting impress upon the life of the nation. The men who have profoundly influenced the growth of our national character have been in most cases precisely those men whose influence was for the best and was strongly felt as antagonistic to the worst tendency of the age. The great writers, who have written in prose or verse, have done much for us. The great orators whose burning words on behalf of liberty, of union, of honest government, have rung through our legislative halls, have done even more. Most of all has been done by the men who have spoken to us through deeds and not words, or whose words have gathered their especial charm and significance because they came from men who did speak in deeds. A nation's greatness lies in its possibility of achievement in the present, and nothing helps it more than the consciousness of achievement in the past.

## CHAPTER II

### TRUE AMERICANISM [1]

PATRIOTISM was once defined as "the last refuge of a scoundrel"; and somebody has recently remarked that when Dr. Johnson gave this definition he was ignorant of the infinite possibilities contained in the word "reform." Of course, both gibes were quite justifiable, in so far as they were aimed at people who use noble names to cloak base purposes. Equally, of course, the man shows little wisdom and a low sense of duty who fails to see that love of country is one of the elemental virtues, even though scoundrels play upon it for their own selfish ends; and, inasmuch as abuses continually grow up in civic life as in all other kinds of life, the statesman is indeed a weakling who hesitates to reform these abuses because the word "reform" is often on the lips of men who are silly or dishonest.

What is true of patriotism and reform is true also of Americanism. There are plenty of scoundrels always ready to try to belittle reform movements or to bolster up existing iniquities in the name of Americanism; but this does not alter the

[1] *The Forum*, April, 1894.

fact that the man who can do most in this country is and must be the man whose Americanism is most sincere and intense. Outrageous though it is to use a noble idea as the cloak for evil, it is still worse to assail the noble idea itself because it can thus be used. The men who do iniquity in the name of patriotism, of reform, of Americanism, are merely one small division of the class that has always existed and will always exist,—the class of hypocrites and demagogues, the class that is always prompt to steal the watchwords of righteousness and use them in the interests of evildoing.

The stoutest and truest Americans are the very men who have the least sympathy with the people who invoke the spirit of Americanism to aid what is vicious in our government or to throw obstacles in the way of those who strive to reform it. It is contemptible to oppose a movement for good because that movement has already succeeded somewhere else, or to champion an existing abuse because our people have always been wedded to it. To appeal to national prejudice against a given reform movement is in every way unworthy and silly. It is as childish to denounce free trade because England has adopted it as to advocate it for the same reason. It is eminently proper, in dealing with the tariff, to consider the effect of tariff legislation in time past upon other nations as well

as the effect upon our own; but in drawing conclusions it is in the last degree foolish to try to excite prejudice against one system because it is in vogue in some given country, or to try to excite prejudice in its favor because the economists of that country have found that it was suited to their own peculiar needs. In attempting to solve our difficult problem of municipal government it is mere folly to refuse to profit by whatever is good in the examples of Manchester and Berlin because these cities are foreign, exactly as it is mere folly blindly to copy their examples without reference to our own totally different conditions. As for the absurdity of declaiming against civil-service reform, for instance, as "Chinese," because written examinations have been used in China, it would be quite as wise to declaim against gunpowder because it was first utilized by the same people. In short, the man who, whether from mere dull fatuity or from an active interest in misgovernment, tries to appeal to American prejudice against things foreign, so as to induce Americans to oppose any measure for good, should be looked on by his fellow-countrymen with the heartiest contempt. So much for the men who appeal to the spirit of Americanism to sustain us in wrongdoing. But we must never let our contempt for these men blind us to the nobility of the idea which they strive to degrade.

We Americans have many grave problems to solve, many threatening evils to fight, and many deeds to do, if, as we hope and believe, we have the wisdom, the strength, the courage, and the virtue to do them. But we must face facts as they are. We must neither surrender ourselves to a foolish optimism, nor succumb to a timid and ignoble pessimism. Our nation is that one among all the nations of the earth which holds in its hands the fate of the coming years. We enjoy exceptional advantages, and are menaced by exceptional dangers; and all signs indicate that we shall either fail greatly or succeed greatly. I firmly believe that we shall succeed; but we must not foolishly blink the dangers by which we are threatened, for that is the way to fail. On the contrary, we must soberly set to work to find out all we can about the existence and extent of every evil, and must then attack it with unyielding resolution. There are many such evils, and each must be fought after a separate fashion; yet there is one quality which we must bring to the solution of every problem,—that is, an intense and fervid Americanism. We shall never be successful over the dangers that confront us; we shall never achieve true greatness, nor reach the lofty ideal which the founders and preservers of our mighty Federal Republic have set before us, unless we are Americans in heart and soul, in spirit and purpose,

keenly alive to the responsibility implied in the very name of American, and proud beyond measure of the glorious privilege of bearing it.

There are two or three sides to the question of Americanism, and two or three senses in which the word "Americanism" can be used to express the antithesis of what is unwholesome and undesirable. In the first place we wish to be broadly American and national, as opposed to being local or sectional. We do not wish, in politics, in literature, or in art, to develop that unwholesome parochial spirit, that over-exaltation of the little community at the expense of the great nation, which produces what has been described as the patriotism of the village, the patriotism of the belfry. Politically, the indulgence of this spirit was the chief cause of the calamities which befell the ancient republics of Greece, the medieval republics of Italy, and the petty states of Germany as it was in the last century. It is this spirit of provincial patriotism, this inability to take a view of broad adhesion to the whole nation that has been the chief among the causes that have produced such anarchy in the South American States, and which have resulted in presenting to us, not one great Spanish-American federal nation stretching from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn, but a squabbling multitude of revolution-ridden States, not one of which stands even in the second rank as a power. However,

politically this question of American nationality has been settled once for all. We are no longer in danger of repeating in our history the shameful and contemptible disasters that have befallen the Spanish possessions on this continent since they threw off the yoke of Spain. Indeed there is, all through our life, very much less of this parochial spirit than there was formerly. Still, there is an occasional outcropping here and there; and it is just as well that we should keep steadily in mind the futility of talking of a Northern literature or a Southern literature, an Eastern or a Western school of art or science. Joel Chandler Harris is emphatically a national writer; so is Mark Twain. They do not write merely for Georgia or Missouri or California any more than for Illinois or Connecticut; they write as Americans and for all people who can read English. St. Gaudens lives in New York; but his work is just as distinctive of Boston or Chicago. It is of very great consequence that we should have a full and ripe literary development in the United States, but it is not of the least consequence whether New York, or Boston, or Chicago, or San Francisco becomes the literary or artistic centre of the United States.

There is a second side to this question of a broad Americanism, however. The patriotism of the village or the belfry is bad, but the lack of all patriotism is even worse. There are philosophers

who assure us that, in the future, patriotism will be regarded not as a virtue at all, but merely as a mental stage in the journey toward a state of feeling when our patriotism will include the whole human race and all the world. This may be so; but the age of which these philosophers speak is still several æons distant. In fact, philosophers of this type are so very advanced that they are of no practical service to the present generation. It may be that in ages so remote that we cannot now understand any of the feelings of those who will dwell in them, patriotism will no longer be regarded as a virtue, exactly as it may be that in those remote ages people will look down upon and disregard monogamic marriage; but as things now are and have been for two or three thousand years past, and are likely to be for two or three thousand years to come, the words "home" and "country" mean a great deal. Nor do they show any tendency to lose their significance. At present, treason, like adultery, ranks as one of the worst of all possible crimes.

One may fall very far short of treason and yet be an undesirable citizen in the community. The man who becomes Europeanized, who loses his power of doing good work on this side of the water, and who loses his love for his native land, is not a traitor; but he is a silly and undesirable citizen. He is as emphatically a noxious element in our

body politic as is the man who comes here from abroad and remains a foreigner. Nothing will more quickly or more surely disqualify a man from doing good work in the world than the acquirement of that flaccid habit of mind which its possessors style cosmopolitanism.

It is not only necessary to Americanize the immigrants of foreign birth who settle among us, but it is even more necessary for those among us who are by birth and descent already Americans not to throw away our birthright, and, with incredible and contemptible folly, wander back to bow down before the alien gods whom our forefathers forsook. It is hard to believe that there is any necessity to warn Americans that, when they seek to model themselves on the lines of other civilizations, they make themselves the butts of all right-thinking men; and yet the necessity certainly exists to give this warning to many of our citizens who pride themselves on their standing in the world of art and letters, or, perchance, on what they would style their social leadership in the community. It is always better to be an original than an imitation, even when the imitation is of something better than the original; but what shall we say of the fool who is content to be an imitation of something worse? Even if the weaklings who seek to be other than Americans were right in deeming other nations to be better than their own,

the fact yet remains that to be a first-class American is fifty-fold better than to be a second-class imitation of a Frenchman or Englishman. As a matter of fact, however, those of our countrymen who do believe in American inferiority are always individuals who, however cultivated, have some organic weakness in their moral or mental make-up; and the great mass of our people, who are robustly patriotic, and who have sound, healthy minds, are justified in regarding these feeble renegades with a half-impatient and half-amused scorn.

We believe in waging relentless war on rank-growing evils of all kinds, and it makes no difference to us if they happen to be of purely native growth. We grasp at any good, no matter whence it comes. We do not accept the evil attendant upon another system of government as an adequate excuse for that attendant upon our own; the fact that the courtier is a scamp does not render the demagogue any the less a scoundrel. But it remains true that, in spite of all our faults and shortcomings, no other land offers such glorious possibilities to the man able to take advantage of them, as does ours; it remains true that no one of our people can do any work really worth doing unless he does it primarily as an American. It is because certain classes of our people still retain their spirit of colonial dependence on, and exag-

gerated deference to, European opinion, that they fail to accomplish what they ought to. It is precisely along the lines where we have worked most independently that we have accomplished the greatest results; and it is in those professions where there has been no servility to, but merely wise profiting by, foreign experience, that we have produced our greatest men. Our soldiers and statesmen and orators; our explorers, our wilderness-winners, and commonwealth builders; the men who have made our laws and seen that they were executed; and the other men whose energy and ingenuity have created our marvellous material prosperity,—all these have been men who have drawn wisdom from the experience of every age and nation, but who have nevertheless thought, and worked, and conquered, and lived, and died, purely as Americans; and on the whole they have done better work than has been done in any other country during the short period of our national life.

On the other hand, it is in those professions where our people have striven hardest to mould themselves in conventional European forms that they have succeeded least; and this holds true to the present day, the failure being, of course, most conspicuous where the man takes up his abode in Europe; where he becomes a second-rate European, because he is over-civilized, over-sensitive,

over-refined, and has lost the hardihood and manly courage by which alone he can conquer in the keen struggle of our national life. Be it remembered, too, that this same being does not really become a European; he only ceases being an American, and becomes nothing. He throws away a great prize for the sake of a lesser one, and does not even get the lesser one. The painter who goes to Paris, not merely to get two or three years' thorough training in his art, but with the deliberate purpose of taking up his abode there, and with the intention of following in the ruts worn deep by ten thousand earlier travellers, instead of striking off to rise or fall on a new line, thereby forfeits all chance of doing the best work. He must content himself with aiming at that kind of mediocrity which consists in doing fairly well what has already been done better; and he usually never even sees the grandeur and picturesqueness lying open before the eyes of every man who can read the book of America's past and the book of America's present. Thus it is with the undersized man of letters, who flees his country because he, with his delicate, effeminate sensitiveness, finds the conditions of life on this side of the water crude and raw; in other words, because he finds that he cannot play a man's part among men, and so goes where he will be sheltered from the winds that harden stouter souls. This *emigré* may write

graceful and pretty verses, essays, novels; but he will never do work to compare with that of his brother, who is strong enough to stand on his own feet and do his work as an American. Thus it is with the scientist who spends his youth in a German university, and can thenceforth work only in the fields already fifty times furrowed by the German ploughs. Thus it is with that most foolish of parents who sends his children to be educated abroad, not knowing—what every clear-sighted man from Washington and Jay down has known—that the American who is to make his way in America should be brought up among his fellow-Americans. It is among the people who like to consider themselves, and, indeed, to a large extent are, the leaders of the so-called social world, especially in some of the northeastern cities, that this thoroughly provincial spirit of admiration for things foreign, and inability to stand on one's own feet, becomes most evident and most despicable. We believe in every kind of honest and lawful pleasure, so long as the getting it is not made man's chief business; and we believe heartily in the good that can be done by men of leisure who work hard in their leisure, whether at politics or philanthropy, literature or art. But a leisure class whose leisure simply means idleness is a curse to the community, and in so far as its members distinguish themselves chiefly by aping the worst

—not the best—traits of similar people across the water, they become both comic and noxious elements of the body politic.

The third sense in which the word "Americanism" may be employed is with reference to the Americanizing of the new-comers to our shores. We must Americanize them in every way, in speech, in political ideas and principles, and in their way of looking at the relations between Church and State. We welcome the German or the Irishman who becomes an American. We have no use for the German or Irishman who remains such. We do not wish German-Americans and Irish-Americans who figure as such in our social and political life; we want only Americans, and, provided they are such, we do not care whether they are of native or of Irish or of German ancestry. We have no room in any healthy American community for a German-American vote or an Irish-American vote, and it is contemptible demagogy to put planks into any party platform with the purpose of catching such a vote. We have no room for any people who do not act and vote simply as Americans and as nothing else. Moreover, we have as little use for people who carry religious prejudices into our politics as for those who carry prejudices of caste or nationality. We stand unalterably in favor of the public-school system in its entirety. We believe that English

and no other language is that in which all the school exercises should be conducted. We are against any division of the school fund, and against any appropriation of public money for sectarian purposes. We are against any recognition whatever by the State in any shape or form of State-aided parochial schools. But we are equally opposed to any discrimination against or for a man because of his creed. We demand that all citizens, Protestant and Catholic, Jew and Gentile, shall have fair treatment in every way; that all alike shall have their rights guaranteed them. The very reasons that make us unqualified in our opposition to State-aided sectarian schools make us equally bent that, in the management of our public schools, the adherents of each creed shall be given exact and equal justice, wholly without regard to their religious affiliations; that trustees, superintendents, teachers, scholars, all alike, shall be treated without any reference whatsoever to the creed they profess. We maintain that it is an outrage, in voting for a man for any position, whether State or national, to take into account his religious faith, provided only he is a good American. When a secret society does what in some places the American Protective Association seems to have done, and tries to proscribe Catholics both politically and socially, the members of such society show that they themselves are as utterly un-American, as

alien to our school of political thought, as the worst immigrants who land on our shores. Their conduct is equally base and contemptible; they are the worst foes of our public-school system, because they strengthen the hands of its ultramontane enemies; they should receive the hearty condemnation of all Americans who are truly patriotic.

The mighty tide of immigration to our shores has brought in its train much of good and much of evil; and whether the good or the evil shall predominate depends mainly on whether these newcomers do or do not throw themselves heartily into our national life, cease to be European, and become Americans like the rest of us. More than a third of the people of the Northern States are of foreign birth or parentage. An immense number of them have become completely Americanized, and these stand on exactly the same plane as the descendants of any Puritan, Cavalier, or Knickerbocker among us, and do their full and honorable share of the nation's work. But where immigrants or the sons of immigrants do not heartily and in good faith throw in their lot with us, but cling to the speech, the customs, the ways of life, and the habits of thought of the Old World which they have left, they thereby harm both themselves and us. If they remain alien elements, unassimilated, and with interests separate from ours, they

are mere obstructions to the current of our national life, and, moreover, can get no good from it themselves. In fact, though we ourselves also suffer from their perversity, it is they who really suffer most. It is an immense benefit to the European immigrant to change him into an American citizen. To bear the name of American is to bear the most honorable of titles; and whoever does not so believe has no business to bear the name at all, and, if he comes from Europe, the sooner he goes back there the better. Besides, the man who does not become Americanized nevertheless fails to remain a European and becomes nothing at all. The immigrant cannot possibly remain what he was, or continue to be a member of the Old-World society. If he tries to retain his old language, in a few generations it becomes a barbarous jargon; if he tries to retain his old customs and ways of life, in a few generations he becomes an uncouth boor. He has cut himself off from the Old World and cannot retain his connection with it; and if he wishes ever to amount to anything he must throw himself heart and soul, and without reservation, into the new life to which he has come. It is urgently necessary to check and regulate our immigration by much more drastic laws than now exist; and this should be done both to keep out laborers who tend to depress the labor market, and to keep out races

which do not assimilate readily with our own, and unworthy individuals of all races—not only criminals, idiots, and paupers, but anarchists of the Most and O'Donovan Rossa type.

From his own standpoint, it is beyond all question the wise thing for the immigrant to become thoroughly Americanized. Moreover, from our standpoint, we have a right to demand it. We freely extend the hand of welcome and of good-fellowship to every man, no matter what his creed or birthplace, who comes here honestly intent on becoming a good United States citizen like the rest of us; but we have a right, and it is our duty to demand that he shall indeed become so, and shall not confuse the issues with which we are struggling by introducing among us Old-World quarrels and prejudices. There are certain ideas which he must give up. For instance, he must learn that American life is incompatible with the existence of any form of anarchy, or of any secret society having murder for its aim, whether at home or abroad; and he must learn that we exact full religious toleration and the complete separation of Church and State. Moreover, he must not bring in his Old-World religious race and national antipathies, but must merge them into love for our common country, and must take pride in the things which we can all take pride in. He must revere only our flag; not only must it come first,

but no other flag should even come second. He must learn to celebrate Washington's birthday rather than that of the Queen or Kaiser, and the Fourth of July instead of St. Patrick's Day. Our political and social questions must be settled on their own merits, and not complicated by quarrels between England and Ireland, or France and Germany, with which we have nothing to do; it is an outrage to fight an American political campaign with reference to questions of European politics. Above all, the immigrant must learn to talk and think and *be* United States.

The immigrant of to-day can learn much from the experience of the immigrants of the past, who came to America prior to the Revolutionary War. We were then already, what we are now, a people of mixed blood. Many of our most illustrious Revolutionary names were borne by men of Huguenot blood—Jay, Sevier, Marion, Laurens. But the Huguenots were, on the whole, the best immigrants we have ever received; sooner than any other, and more completely, they became American in speech, conviction, and thought. The Hollanders took longer than the Huguenots to become completely assimilated; nevertheless they in the end became so, immensely to their own advantage. One of the leading Revolutionary generals, Schuyler, and one of the Presidents of the United States, Van Buren, were of Dutch blood; but they

rose to their positions, the highest in the land, because they had become Americans and had ceased being Hollanders. If they had remained members of an alien body, cut off by their speech and customs and belief from the rest of the American community, Schuyler would have lived his life as a boorish, provincial squire, and Van Buren would have ended his days a small tavern-keeper. So it is with the Germans of Pennsylvania. Those of them who became Americanized have furnished to our history a multitude of honorable names, from the days of the Mühlenbergs onward; but those who did not become Americanized form to the present day an unimportant body, of no significance in American existence. So it is with the Irish, who gave to Revolutionary annals such names as Carroll and Sullivan, and to the Civil War men like Sheridan—men who were Americans and nothing else: while the Irish who remain such and busy themselves solely with alien politics, can have only an unhealthy influence upon American life, and can never rise as do their compatriots who become straightout Americans. Thus it has ever been with all people who have come hither, of whatever stock or blood. The same thing is true of the churches. A church which remains foreign in language or spirit is doomed.

But I wish to be distinctly understood on one

point. Americanism is a question of spirit, conviction, and purpose, not of creed or birthplace. The politician who bids for the Irish or German vote, or the Irishman or German who votes as an Irishman or German, is despicable, for all citizens of this commonwealth should vote solely as Americans; but he is not a whit less despicable than the voter who votes against a good American, merely because that American happens to have been born in Ireland or Germany. Know-nothingism, in any form, is as utterly un-American as foreignism. It is a base outrage to oppose a man because of his religion or birthplace, and all good citizens will hold any such effort in abhorrence. A Scandinavian, a German, or an Irishman who has really become an American has the right to stand on exactly the same footing as any native-born citizen in the land, and is just as much entitled to the friendship and support, social and political, of his neighbors. Among the men with whom I have been thrown in close personal contact socially, and who have been among my staunchest friends and allies politically, are not a few Americans who happen to have been born on the other side of the water,—in Germany, Ireland, Scandinavia; and there could be no better men in the ranks of our native-born citizens.

In closing, I cannot better express the ideal attitude that should be taken by our fellow-citizens of

foreign birth than by quoting the words of a representative American, born in Germany, the Honorable Richard Guenther of Wisconsin. In a speech, spoken at the time of the Samoan trouble, he said:

"We know as well as any other class of American citizens where our duties belong. We will work for our country in time of peace and fight for it in time of war, if a time of war should ever come. When I say our country, I mean, of course, our adopted country. I mean the United States of America. After passing through the crucible of naturalization, we are no longer Germans; we are Americans. Our attachment to America cannot be measured by the length of our residence here. We are Americans from the moment we touch the American shore until we are laid in American graves. We will fight for America whenever necessary. America, first, last, and all the time. America against Germany, America against the world; America, right or wrong; always America. We are Americans."

All honor to the man who spoke such words as those; and I believe they express the feelings of the great majority of those among our fellow-American citizens who were born abroad. We Americans can only do our allotted task well if we face it steadily and bravely, seeing but not fearing the dangers. Above all, we must stand shoulder

to shoulder, not asking as to the ancestry or creed of our comrades, but only demanding that they be in very truth Americans, and that we all work together—heart, hand, and head—for the honor and the greatness of our common country.

## CHAPTER III

### THE MANLY VIRTUES AND PRACTICAL POLITICS [1]

SOMETIMES, in addressing men who sincerely desire the betterment of our public affairs, but who have not taken active part in directing them, I feel tempted to tell them that there are two gospels which should be preached to every reformer. The first is the gospel of morality; the second is the gospel of efficiency.

To decent, upright citizens it is hardly necessary to preach the doctrine of morality as applied to the affairs of public life. It is an even graver offence to sin against the commonwealth than to sin against an individual. The man who debauches our public life, whether by malversation of funds in office, by the actual bribery of voters or of legislators, or by the corrupt use of the offices as spoils wherewith to reward the unworthy and the vicious for their noxious and interested activity in the baser walks of political life,—this man is a greater foe to our well-being as a nation than is even the defaulting cashier of a bank, or the betrayer of a private trust. No amount of intelligence and no amount of energy will save a nation

[1] *The Forum*, July, 1894.

which is not honest, and no government can ever be a permanent success if administered in accordance with base ideals. The first requisite in the citizen who wishes to share the work of our public life, whether he wishes himself to hold office or merely to do his plain duty as an American by taking part in the management of our political machinery, is that he shall act disinterestedly and with a sincere purpose to serve the whole commonwealth.

But disinterestedness and honesty and unselfish desire to do what is right are not enough in themselves. A man must not only be disinterested, but he must be efficient. If he goes into politics he must go into practical politics, in order to make his influence felt. Practical politics must not be construed to mean dirty politics. On the contrary, in the long run the politics of fraud and treachery and foulness are unpractical politics, and the most practical of all politicians is the politician who is clean and decent and upright. But a man who goes into the actual battles of the political world must prepare himself much as he would for the struggle in any other branch of our life. He must be prepared to meet men of far lower ideals than his own, and to face things, not as he would wish them, but as they are. He must not lose his own high ideal, and yet he must face the fact that the majority of the men with whom he must

work have lower ideals. He must stand firmly for what he believes, and yet he must realize that political action, to be effective, must be the joint action of many men, and that he must sacrifice somewhat of his own opinions to those of his associates if he ever hopes to see his desires take practical shape.

The prime thing that every man who takes an interest in politics should remember is that he must act, and not merely criticise the actions of others. It is not the man who sits by his fireside reading his evening paper, and saying how bad our politics and politicians are, who will ever do anything to save us; it is the man who goes out into the rough hurly-burly of the caucus, the primary, and the political meeting, and there faces his fellows on equal terms. The real service is rendered, not by the critic who stands aloof from the contest, but by the man who enters into it and bears his part as a man should, undeterred by the blood and the sweat. It is a pleasant but a dangerous thing to associate merely with cultivated, refined men of high ideals and sincere purpose to do right, and to think that one has done all one's duty by discussing politics with such associates. It is a good thing to meet men of this stamp; indeed it is a necessary thing, for we thereby brighten our ideals and keep in touch with the people who are unselfish in their purposes; but if we associate

with such men exclusively we can accomplish nothing. The actual battle must be fought out on other and less pleasant fields. The actual advance must be made in the field of practical politics among the men who represent or guide or control the mass of the voters, the men who are sometimes rough and coarse, who sometimes have lower ideals than they should, but who are capable, masterful, and efficient. It is only by mingling on equal terms with such men, by showing them that one is able to give and to receive heavy punishment without flinching, and that one can master the details of political management as well as they can, that it is possible for a man to establish a standing that will be useful to him in fighting for a great reform. Every man who wishes well to his country is in honor bound to take an active part in political life. If he does his duty and takes that active part he will be sure occasionally to commit mistakes and to be guilty of shortcomings. For these mistakes and shortcomings he will receive the unmeasured denunciation of the critics who commit neither, because they never do anything but criticise. Nevertheless he will have the satisfaction of knowing that the salvation of the country ultimately lies, not in the hands of his critics, but in the hands of those who, however imperfectly, actually do the work of the nation. I would not for one moment be under-

stood as objecting to criticism or failing to appreciate its importance. We need fearless criticism of our public men and public parties; we need unsparing condemnation of all persons and all principles that count for evil in our public life: but it behooves every man to remember that the work of the critic, important though it is, is of altogether secondary importance, and that, in the end, progress is accomplished by the man who does the things, and not by the man who talks about how they ought or ought not to be done.

Therefore the man who wishes to do good in his community must go into active political life. If he is a Republican, let him join his local Republican association; if a Democrat, the Democratic association; if an Independent, then let him put himself in touch with those who think as he does. In any event, let him make himself an active force and make his influence felt. Whether he works within or without party lines he can surely find plenty of men who are desirous of good government, and who, if they act together, become at once a power on the side of righteousness. Of course, in a government like ours, a man can accomplish anything only by acting in combination with others, and equally, of course, a number of people can act together only by each sacrificing certain of his beliefs or prejudices. That man is indeed unfortunate who cannot in any given dis-

trict find some people with whom he can conscientiously act. He may find that he can do best by acting within a party organization; he may find that he can do best by acting, at least for certain purposes, or at certain times, outside of party organizations, in an independent body of some kind; but with some association he must act if he wishes to exert any real influence.

One thing to be always remembered is that neither independence on the one hand nor party fealty on the other can ever be accepted as an excuse for failure to do active work in politics. The party man who offers his allegiance to party as an excuse for blindly following his party, right or wrong, and who fails to try to make that party in any way better, commits a crime against the country; and a crime quite as serious is committed by the independent who makes his independence an excuse for easy self-indulgence, and who thinks that when he says he belongs to neither party he is excused from the duty of taking part in the practical work of party organizations. The party man is bound to do his full share in party management. He is bound to attend the caucuses and the primaries, to see that only good men are put up, and to exert his influence as strenuously against the foes of good government within his party, as, through his party machinery, he does against those who are without

the party. In the same way the Independent, if he cannot take part in the regular organizations, is bound to do just as much active constructive work (not merely the work of criticism) outside; he is bound to try to get up an organization of his own and to try to make that organization felt in some effective manner. Whatever course the man who wishes to do his duty by his country takes in reference to parties or to independence of parties, he is bound to try to put himself in touch with men who think as he does, and to help make their joint influence felt in behalf of the powers that go for decency and good government. He must try to accomplish things; he must not vote in the air unless it is really necessary. Occasionally a man must cast a "conscience vote," when there is no possibility of carrying to victory his principles or his nominees; at times, indeed, this may be his highest duty; but ordinarily this is not the case. As a general rule a man ought to work and vote for something which there is at least a fair chance of putting into effect.

Yet another thing to be remembered by the man who wishes to make his influence felt for good in our politics is that he must act purely as an American. If he is not deeply imbued with the American spirit he cannot succeed. Any organization which tries to work along the line of caste or creed, which fails to treat all American citizens on their

merits as men, will fail, and will deserve to fail. Where our political life is healthy, there is and can be no room for any movement organized to help or to antagonize men because they do or do not profess a certain religion, or because they were or were not born here or abroad. We have a right to ask that those with whom we associate, and those for whom we vote, shall be themselves good Americans in heart and spirit, unhampered by adherence to foreign ideals, and acting without regard to the national and religious prejudices of European countries; but if they are really good Americans in spirit and thought and purpose, that is all that we have any right to consider in regard to them. In the same way there must be no discrimination for or against any man because of his social standing. On the one side, there is nothing to be made out of a political organization which draws an exclusive social line, and on the other it must be remembered that it is just as un-American to vote against a man because he is rich as to vote against him because he is poor. The one man has just as much right as the other to claim to be treated purely on his merits as a man. In short, to do good work in politics, the men who organize must organize wholly without regard to whether their associates were born here or abroad, whether they are Protestants or Catholics, Jews or Gentiles, whether they are bankers or

butchers, professors or day-laborers. All that can rightly be asked of one's political associates is that they shall be honest men, good Americans, and substantially in accord as regards their political ideas.

Another thing that must not be forgotten by the man desirous of doing good political work is the need of the rougher, manlier virtues, and above all the virtue of personal courage—physical as well as moral. If we wish to do good work for our country, we must be unselfish, disinterested, sincerely desirous of the well-being of the commonwealth, and capable of devoted adherence to a lofty ideal; but in addition we must be vigorous in mind and body, able to hold our own in rough conflict with our fellows, able to suffer punishment without flinching, and, at need, to repay it in kind with full interest. A peaceful and commercial civilization is always in danger of suffering the loss of the virile fighting qualities without which no nation, however cultured, however refined, however thrifty and prosperous, can ever amount to anything. Every citizen should be taught, both in public and in private life, that while he must avoid brawling and quarrelling, it is his duty to stand up for his rights. He must realize that the only man who is more contemptible than the blusterer and bully is the coward. No man is worth much to the commonwealth if he is not

capable of feeling righteous wrath and just indignation, if he is not stirred to hot anger by misdoing, and is not impelled to see justice meted out to the wrong-doers. No man is worth much anywhere if he does not possess both moral and physical courage. A politician who really serves his country well and deserves his country's gratitude, must usually possess some of the hardy virtues which we admire in the soldier who serves his country well in the field.

An ardent young reformer is very apt to try to begin by reforming too much. He needs always to keep in mind that he has got to serve as a sergeant before he assumes the duties of commander-in-chief. It is right for him from the beginning to take a great interest in national, State, and municipal affairs, and to try to make himself felt in them if the occasion arises; but the best work must be done by the citizen working in his own ward or district. Let him associate himself with the men who think as he does, and who, like him, are sincerely devoted to the public good. Then let them try to make themselves felt in the choice of alderman, of councilman, of assemblyman. The politicians will be prompt to recognize their power, and the people will recognize it, too, after a while. Let them organize and work, undaunted by any temporary defeat. If they fail at first, and if they fail again, let them merely

make up their minds to redouble their efforts and perhaps alter their methods; but let them keep on working.

It is sheer unmanliness and cowardice to shrink from the contest because at first there is failure, or because the work is difficult or repulsive. No man who is worth his salt has any right to abandon the effort to better our politics merely because he does not find it pleasant, merely because it entails associations which to him happen to be disagreeable. Let him keep right on, taking the buffets he gets good-humoredly, and repaying them with heartiness when the chance arises. Let him make up his mind that he will have to face the violent opposition of the spoils politician, and also, too often, the unfair and ungenerous criticism of those who ought to know better. Let him be careful not to show himself so thin-skinned as to mind either; let him fight his way forward, paying only so much regard to both as is necessary to enable him to win in spite of them. He may not, and indeed probably will not, accomplish nearly as much as he would like to, or as he thinks he ought to: but he will certainly accomplish something; and if he can feel that he has helped to elevate the type of representative sent to the municipal, the State, or the national legislature from his district, or to elevate the standard of duty among the public officials in his own ward, he has

a right to be profoundly satisfied with what he has accomplished.

Finally, there is one other matter which the man who tries to wake his fellows to higher political action would do well to ponder. It is a good thing to appeal to citizens to work for good government because it will better their estate materially, but it is a far better thing to appeal to them to work for good government because it is right in itself to do so. Doubtless, if we can have clean honest politics, we shall be better off in material matters. A thoroughly pure, upright, and capable administration of the affairs of New York city results in a very appreciable increase of comfort to each citizen. We should have better systems of transportation; we should have cleaner streets, better sewers, and the like. But it is sometimes difficult to show the individual citizen that he will be individually better off in his business and in his home affairs for taking part in politics. I do not think it is always worth while to show that this will always be the case. The citizen should be appealed to primarily on the ground that it is his plain duty, if he wishes to deserve the name of freeman, to do his full share in the hard and difficult work of self-government. He must do his share unless he is willing to prove himself unfit for free institutions, fit only to live under a government where he will be plundered

and bullied because he deserves to be plundered and bullied on account of his selfish timidity and short-sightedness. A clean and decent government is sure in the end to benefit our citizens in the material circumstances of their lives; but each citizen should be appealed to, to take part in bettering our politics, not for the sake of any possible improvement it may bring to his affairs, but on the ground that it is his plain duty to do so, and that this is a duty which it is cowardly and dishonorable in him to shirk.

To sum up, then, the men who wish to work for decent politics must work practically, and yet must not swerve from their devotion to a high ideal. They must actually do things, and not merely confine themselves to criticising those who do them. They must work disinterestedly, and appeal to the disinterested element in others, although they must also do work which will result in the material betterment of the community. They must act as Americans through and through, in spirit and hope and purpose, and, while being disinterested, unselfish, and generous in their dealings with others, they must also show that they possess the essential manly virtues of energy, of resolution, and of indomitable personal courage.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE COLLEGE GRADUATE AND PUBLIC LIFE [1]

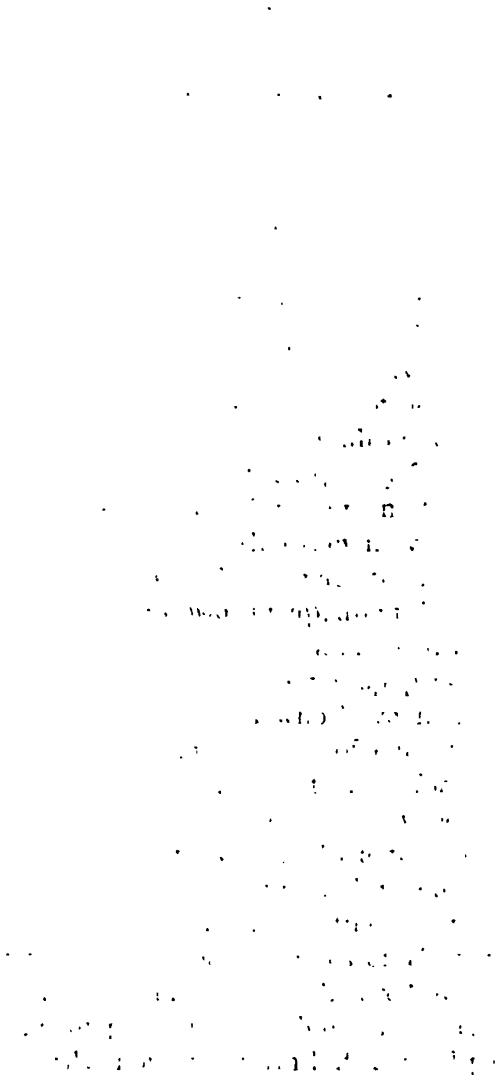
THERE are always, in our national life, certain tendencies that give us ground for alarm, and certain others that give us ground for hope. Among the latter we must put the fact that there has undoubtedly been a growing feeling among educated men that they are in honor bound to do their full share of the work of American public life.

We have in this country an equality of rights. It is the plain duty of every man to see that his rights are respected. That weak good-nature which acquiesces in wrong-doing, whether from laziness, timidity, or indifference, is a very unwholesome quality. It should be second nature with every man to insist that he be given full justice. But if there is an equality of rights, there is an equality of duties. It is proper to demand more from the man with exceptional advantages than from the man without them. A heavy moral obligation rests upon the man of means and upon the man of education to do their full duty by their country. On no class does this obligation rest

[1] *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1894.

more heavily than upon the men with a collegiate education, the men who are graduates of our universities. Their education gives them no right to feel the least superiority over any of their fellow-citizens; but it certainly ought to make them feel that they should stand foremost in the honorable effort to serve the whole public by doing their duty as Americans in the body politic. This obligation very possibly rests even more heavily upon the men of means; but of this it is not necessary now to speak. The men of mere wealth never can have and never should have the capacity for doing good work that is possessed by the men of exceptional mental training; but that they may become both a laughing-stock and a menace to the community is made unpleasantly apparent by that portion of the New York business and social world which is most in evidence in the newspapers.

To the great body of men who have had exceptional advantages in the way of educational facilities, we have a right, then, to look for good service to the State. The service may be rendered in many different ways. In a reasonable number of cases, the man may himself rise to high political position. That men do actually so rise is shown by the number of graduates of Harvard, Yale, and our other universities who are now taking a prominent part in public life. These cases must necessarily, however, form but a small part



of the whole. The enormous majority of our educated men have to make their own living, and are obliged to take up careers in which they must work heart and soul to succeed. Nevertheless, the man of business and the man of science, the doctor of divinity and the doctor of law, the architect, the engineer, and the writer, all alike owe a positive duty to the community, the neglect of which they cannot excuse on any plea of their private affairs. They are bound to follow understandingly the course of public events; they are bound to try to estimate and form judgment upon public men; and they are bound to act intelligently and effectively in support of the principles which they deem to be right and for the best interests of the country.

The most important thing for this class of educated men to realize is that they do not really form a class at all. I have used the word in default of another, but I have merely used it roughly to group together people who have had unusual opportunities of a certain kind. A large number of the people to whom these opportunities are offered fail to take advantage of them, and a very much larger number of those to whom they have not been offered succeed none the less in making them for themselves. An educated man must not go into politics as such; he must go in simply as an American; and when he is once in, he will

speedily realize that he must work very hard indeed, or he will be upset by some other American, with no education at all, but with much natural capacity. His education ought to make him feel particularly ashamed of himself if he acts meanly or dishonestly, or in any way falls short of the ideal of good citizenship, and it ought to make him feel that he must show that he has profited by it; but it should certainly give him no feeling of superiority until by actual work he has shown that superiority. In other words, the educated man must realize that he is living in a democracy and under democratic conditions, and that he is entitled to no more respect and consideration than he can win by actual performance.

This must be steadily kept in mind not only by educated men themselves, but particularly by the men who give the tone to our great educational institutions. These educational institutions, if they are to do their best work, must strain every effort to keep their life in touch with the life of the nation at the present day. This is necessary for the country, but it is very much more necessary for the educated men themselves. It is a misfortune for any land if its people of cultivation take little part in shaping its destiny; but the misfortune is far greater for the people of cultivation. The country has a right to demand the honest and efficient service of every man in it, but especially

of every man who has had the advantage of rigid mental and moral training; the country is so much the poorer when any class of honest men fail to do their duty by it; but the loss to the class itself is immeasurable. If our educated men as a whole become incapable of playing their full part in our life, if they cease doing their share of the rough, hard work which must be done, and grow to take a position of mere dilettanteism in our public affairs, they will speedily sink in relation to their fellows who really do the work of governing, until they stand toward them as a cultivated, ineffective man with a taste for bric-à-brac stands toward a great artist. When once a body of citizens becomes thoroughly out of touch and out of temper with the national life, its usefulness is gone, and its power of leaving its mark on the times is gone also.

The first great lesson which the college graduate should learn is the lesson of work rather than of criticism. Criticism is necessary and useful; it is often indispensable; but it can never take the place of action or be even a poor substitute for it. The function of the mere critic is of very subordinate usefulness. It is the doer of deeds who actually counts in the battle for life, and not the man who looks on and says how the fight ought to be fought, without himself sharing the stress and the danger.

There is, however, a need for proper critical work. Wrongs should be strenuously and fearlessly denounced; evil principles and evil men should be condemned. The politician who cheats or swindles, or the newspaper man who lies in any form, should be made to feel that he is an object of scorn for all honest men. We need fearless criticism; but we need that it should also be intelligent. At present the man who is most apt to regard himself as an intelligent critic of our political affairs is often the man who knows nothing whatever about them. Criticism which is ignorant or prejudiced is a source of great harm to the nation; and where ignorant or prejudiced critics are themselves educated men, their attitude does real harm also to the class to which they belong.

The tone of a portion of the press of the country toward public men, and especially toward political opponents, is degrading, all forms of coarse and noisy slander being apparently considered legitimate weapons to employ against men of the opposite party or faction. Unfortunately, not a few of the journals that pride themselves upon being independent in politics, and the organs of cultivated men, betray the same characteristics in a less coarse but quite as noxious form. All these journals do great harm by accustoming good citizens to see their public men, good and bad,

assailed indiscriminately as scoundrels. The effect is twofold: the citizen learning, on the one hand, to disbelieve any statement he sees in any newspaper, so that the attacks on evil lose their edge; and, on the other, gradually acquiring a deep-rooted belief that all public men are more or less bad. In consequence, his political instinct becomes hopelessly blurred, and he grows unable to tell the good representative from the bad. The worst offence that can be committed against the Republic is the offence of the public man who betrays his trust; but second only to it comes the offence of the man who tries to persuade others that an honest and efficient public man is dishonest or unworthy. This is a wrong that can be committed in a great many different ways. Downright foul abuse may be, after all, less dangerous than incessant misstatements, sneers, and those half-truths that are the meanest lies.

For educated men of weak fibre, there lies a real danger in that species of literary work which appeals to their cultivated senses because of its scholarly and pleasant tone, but which enjoins as the proper attitude to assume in public life one of mere criticism and negation; which teaches the adoption toward public men and public affairs of that sneering tone which so surely denotes a mean and small mind. If a man does not have belief and enthusiasm, the chances are small indeed that

he will ever do a man's work in the world; and the paper or the college which, by its general course, tends to eradicate this power of belief and enthusiasm, this desire for work, has rendered to the young men under its influence the worst service it could possibly render. Good can often be done by criticising sharply and severely the wrong; but excessive indulgence in criticism is never anything but bad, and no amount of criticism can in any way take the place of active and zealous warfare for the right.

Again, there is a certain tendency in college life, —a tendency encouraged by some of the very papers referred to,—to make educated men shrink from contact with the rough people who do the world's work, and associate only with one another and with those who think as they do. This is a most dangerous tendency. It is very agreeable to deceive one's self into the belief that one is performing the whole duty of man by sitting at home in ease, doing nothing wrong, and confining one's participation in politics to conversations and meetings with men who have had the same training and look at things in the same way. It is always a temptation to do this, because those who do nothing else often speak as if in some way they deserved credit for their attitude, and as if they stood above their brethren who plough the rough fields. Moreover, many people whose political

work is done more or less after this fashion are very noble and very sincere in their aims and aspirations, and are striving for what is best and most decent in public life.

Nevertheless, this is a snare round which it behooves every young man to walk carefully. Let him beware of associating only with the people of his own caste and of his own little ways of political thought. Let him learn that he must deal with the mass of men; that he must go out and stand shoulder to shoulder with his friends of every rank, and face to face with his foes of every rank, and must bear himself well in the hurly-burly. He must not be frightened by the many unpleasant features of the contest, and he must not expect to have it all his own way or to accomplish too much. He will meet with checks and will make many mistakes; but if he perseveres, he will achieve a measure of success and will do a measure of good such as is never possible to the refined, cultivated, intellectual men who shrink aside from the actual fray.

Yet again, college men must learn to be as practical in politics as they would be in business or in law. It is surely unnecessary to say that by "practical" I do not mean anything that savors in the least of dishonesty. On the contrary, a college man is peculiarly bound to keep a high ideal and be true to it; but he must work in

practical ways to try to realize this ideal, and must not refuse to do anything because he cannot get everything. One especially necessary thing is to know the facts by actual experience, and not to take refuge in mere theorizing. There are always a number of excellent and well-meaning men whom we grow to regard with amused impatience because they waste all their energies on some visionary scheme which, even if it were not visionary, would be useless. When they come to deal with political questions, these men are apt to err from sheer lack of familiarity with the workings of our government. No man ever really learned from books how to manage a governmental system. Books are admirable adjuncts, and the statesman who has carefully studied them is far more apt to do good work than if he had not; but if he has never done anything but study books he will not be a statesman at all. Thus, every young politician should of course read the *Federalist*. It is the greatest book of the kind that has ever been written. Hamilton, Madison, and Jay would have been poorly equipped for writing it if they had not possessed an extensive acquaintance with literature, and in particular if they had not been careful students of political literature; but the great cause of the value of their writings lay in the fact that they knew by actual work and association what practical politics meant. They had helped

to shape the political thought of the country, and to do its legislative and executive work, and so they were in a condition to speak understandingly about it. For similar reasons, Mr. Bryce's *American Commonwealth* has a value possessed by no other book of the kind, largely because Mr. Bryce is himself an active member of Parliament, a man of good standing and some leadership in his own party, and a practical politician. In the same way a life of Washington by Cabot Lodge, a sketch of Lincoln by Carl Schurz, a biography of Pitt by Lord Rosebery, have an added value because of the writers' own work in politics.

It is always a pity to see men fritter away their energies on any pointless scheme; and, unfortunately, a good many of our educated people, when they come to deal with politics, do just such frittering. Take, for instance, the queer freak of arguing in favor of establishing what its advocates are pleased to call "responsible government" in our institutions, or in other words of grafting certain features of the English parliamentary system upon our own Presidential and Congressional system. This agitation was too largely deficient in body to enable it to last, and it has now, I think, died away; but at one time quite a number of our men who spoke of themselves as students of political history were engaged in treating this scheme as something serious. Few men who had

ever taken an active part in politics, or who had studied politics in the way that a doctor is expected to study surgery and medicine, so much as gave it a thought; but very intelligent men did, just because they were misdirecting their energies and were wholly ignorant that they ought to know practically about a problem before they attempted its solution. The English, or so-called "responsible," theory of parliamentary government is one entirely incompatible with our own governmental institutions. It could not be put into operation here save by absolutely sweeping away the United States Constitution. Incidentally, I may say it would be to the last degree undesirable, if it were practicable. But this is not the point upon which I wish to dwell; the point is that it was wholly impracticable to put it into operation, and that an agitation favoring this kind of government was, from its nature, unintelligent. The people who wrote about it wasted their time, whereas they could have spent it to great advantage had they seriously studied our institutions and sought to devise practicable and desirable methods of increasing and centring genuine responsibility—for all thinking men agree that there is an undoubted need for a change in this direction.

But, of course, much of the best work that has been done in the field of political study has been done by men who were not active politicians,

though they were careful and painstaking students of the phenomena of politics. The back numbers of our leading magazines afford proof of this. Certain of the governmental essays by such writers as Mr. Lawrence Lowell and Professor A. B. Hart, and especially such books as that on the *Speakers' Powers and Duties*, by Miss Follet, have been genuine and valuable contributions to our political thought. These essays have been studied carefully not only by scholars, but by men engaged in practical politics, because they were written with good judgment and keen insight after careful investigation of the facts, and so deserved respectful attention.

It is a misfortune for any people when the paths of the practical and the theoretical politicians diverge so widely that they have no common standing-ground. When the Greek thinkers began to devote their attention to purely visionary politics of the kind found in Plato's *Republic*, while the Greek practical politicians simply exploited the quarrelsome little commonwealths in their own interests, then the end of Greek liberty was at hand. No government that cannot command the respectful support of the best thinkers is in an entirely sound condition; but it is well to keep in mind the remark of Frederick the Great, that if he wished to punish a province he would allow it to be governed by the philosophers. It is a great

misfortune for the country when the practical politician and the doctrinaire have no point in common, but the misfortune is, if anything, greatest for the doctrinaire. The ideal to be set before the student of politics and the practical politician alike is the ideal of the *Federalist*. Each man should realize that he cannot do his best, either in the study of politics or in applied politics unless he has a working knowledge of both branches. A limited number of people can do good work by the careful study of governmental institutions, but they can do it only if they have themselves a practical knowledge of the workings of these institutions. A very large number of people, on the other hand, may do excellent work in politics without much theoretic knowledge of the subject; but without this knowledge they cannot rise to the highest rank, while in any rank their capacity to do good work will be immensely increased if they have such knowledge.

There are certain other qualities about which it is hardly necessary to speak. If an educated man is not heartily American in instinct and feeling and taste and sympathy, he will amount to nothing in our public life. Patriotism, love of country, and pride in the flag which symbolizes country may be feelings which the race will at some period outgrow, but at present they are very real and strong, and the man who lacks them

is a useless creature, a mere incumbrance to the land.

A man of sound political instincts can no more subscribe to the doctrine of absolute independence of party on the one hand than to that of unquestioning party allegiance on the other. No man can accomplish much unless he works in an organization with others, and this organization, no matter how temporary, is a party for the time being. But that man is a dangerous citizen who so far mistakes means for ends as to become servile in his devotion to his party and afraid to leave it when the party goes wrong. To deify either independence or party allegiance merely as such is a little absurd. It depends entirely upon the motive, the purpose, the result. For the last two years the Senator who, beyond all his colleagues in the United States Senate, has shown himself independent of party ties is the very man to whom the leading champions of independence in politics most strenuously object. The truth is, simply, that there are times when it may be the duty of a man to break with his party, and there are other times when it may be his duty to stand by his party, even though, on some points, he thinks that party wrong; he must be prepared to leave it when necessary and he must not sacrifice his influence by leaving it unless it is necessary. If we had no party allegiance our politics would

become mere windy anarchy, and, under present conditions, our government could hardly continue at all. If we had no independence, we should always be running the risk of the most degraded kind of despotism,—the despotism of the party boss and the party machine.

It is just the same way about compromises. Occasionally one hears some well-meaning person say of another, apparently in praise, that he is "never willing to compromise." It is a mere truism to say that, in politics, there has to be one continual compromise. Of course, now and then questions arise upon which a compromise is inadmissible. There could be no compromise with secession, and there was none. There should be no avoidable compromise about any great moral question. But only a very few great reforms or great measures of any kind can be carried through without concession. No student of American history needs to be reminded that the Constitution itself is a bundle of compromises, and was adopted only because of this fact, and that the same thing is true of the Emancipation Proclamation.

In conclusion, then, the man with a university education is in honor bound to take an active part in our political life, and to do his full duty as a citizen by helping his fellow-citizens to the extent of his power in the exercise of the rights of self-government. He is bound to rank action far

above criticism, and to understand that the man deserving of credit is the man who actually does the things, even though imperfectly, and not the man who confines himself to talking about how they ought to be done. He is bound to have a high ideal and to strive to realize it, and yet he must make up his mind that he will never be able to get the highest good, and that he must devote himself with all his energy to getting the best that he can. Finally, his work must be disinterested and honest, and it must be given without regard to his own success or failure, and without regard to the effect it has upon his own fortunes; and while he must show the virtues of uprightness and tolerance and gentleness, he must also show the sterner virtues of courage, resolution, and hardihood, and the desire to war with merciless effectiveness against the existence of wrong.

# CHAPTER V

## PHASES OF STATE LEGISLATION [1]

### *The Albany Legislature*

FEW persons realize the magnitude of the interests affected by State legislation in New York. It is no mere figure of speech to call New York the Empire State; and many of the laws most directly and immediately affecting the interests of its citizens are passed at Albany, and not at Washington. In fact, there is at Albany a little home-rule parliament which presides over the destinies of a commonwealth more populous than any one of two thirds of the kingdoms of Europe, and one which, in point of wealth, material prosperity, variety of interests, extent of territory, and capacity for expansion, can fairly be said to rank next to the powers of the first class. This little parliament, composed of one hundred and twenty-eight members in the Assembly and thirty-two in the Senate, is, in the fullest sense of the term, a *representative* body; there is hardly one of the many and widely diversified interests of the State that has not a mouthpiece at Albany,

[1] *The Century*, January, 1885.

and hardly a single class of its citizens—not even excepting, I regret to say, the criminal class—which lacks its representative among the legislators. In the three Legislatures of which I have been a member, I have sat with bankers and bricklayers, with merchants and mechanics, with lawyers, farmers, day-laborers, saloon-keepers, clergymen, and prize-fighters. Among my colleagues there were many very good men; there was a still more numerous class of men who were neither very good nor very bad, but went one way or the other, according to the strength of the various conflicting influences acting around, behind, and upon them; and, finally, there were many very bad men. Still, the New York Legislature, taken as a whole, is by no means as bad a body as we would be led to believe if our judgment was based purely on what we read in the great metropolitan papers; for the custom of the latter is to portray things as either very much better or very much worse than they are. Where a number of men, many of them poor, some of them unscrupulous, and others elected by constituents too ignorant to hold them to a proper accountability for their actions, are put into a position of great temporary power, where they are called to take action upon questions affecting the welfare of large corporations and wealthy private individuals, the chances for corruption are always great; and that there is

much viciousness and political dishonesty, much moral cowardice, and a good deal of actual bribe-taking in Albany, no one who has had any practical experience of legislation can doubt; but, at the same time, I think that the good members generally outnumber the bad, and that there is not often doubt as to the result when a naked question of right or wrong can be placed clearly and in its true light before the Legislature. The trouble is that on many questions the Legislature never does have the right and wrong clearly shown it. Either some bold, clever parliamentary tactician snaps the measure through before the members are aware of its nature, or else the obnoxious features are so combined with good ones as to procure the support of a certain proportion of that large class of men whose intentions are excellent, but whose intellects are foggy. Or else the necessary party organization, which we call the "machine," uses its great power for some definite evil aim.

### *The Character of the Representatives*

The representatives from different sections of the State differ widely in character. Those from the country districts are generally very good men. They are usually well-to-do farmers, small lawyers, or prosperous store-keepers, and are shrewd, quiet, and honest. They often are narrow-minded and

slow to receive an idea; but, on the other hand, when they get a good one they cling to it with the utmost tenacity. They form very much the most valuable class of legislators. For the most part they are native Americans, and those who are not are men who have become completely Americanized in all their ways and habits of thought. One of the most useful members of the last Legislature was a German from a western county, and the extent of his Americanization can be judged from the fact that he was actually an ardent prohibitionist: certainly no one who knows Teutonic human nature will require further proof. Again, I sat for an entire session beside a very intelligent member from northern New York before I discovered that he was an Irishman: all his views of legislation, even upon such subjects as free schools and the impropriety of making appropriations from the treasury for the support of sectarian institutions, were precisely similar to those of his Protestant-American neighbors, though he himself was a Catholic. Now a German or an Irishman from one of the great cities would probably have retained many of his national peculiarities.

It is from these same great cities that the worst legislators come. It is true that there are always among them a few cultivated and scholarly men who are well educated, and who stand on a higher and broader intellectual and moral plane than the

country members, but the bulk are very low indeed. They are usually foreigners, of little or no education, with exceedingly misty ideas as to morality, and possessed of an ignorance so profound that it could only be called comic, were it not for the fact that it has at times such serious effects upon our laws. It is their ignorance, quite as much as actual viciousness, which makes it so difficult to procure the passage of good laws or prevent the passage of bad ones; and it is the most irritating of the many elements with which we have to contend in the fight for good government.

### *Dark Side of the Legislative Picture*

Mention has been made above of the bribe-taking which undoubtedly at times occurs in the New York Legislature. This is what is commonly called "a delicate subject" with which to deal, and, therefore, according to our usual methods of handling delicate subjects, it is either never discussed at all, or else discussed with the grossest exaggeration; but most certainly there is nothing about which it is more important to know the truth.

In each of the last three Legislatures there were a number of us who were interested in getting through certain measures which we deemed to be for the public good, but which were certain to be

strongly opposed, some for political and some for pecuniary reasons. Now, to get through any such measure requires genuine hard work, a certain amount of parliamentary skill, a good deal of tact and courage, and, above all, a thorough knowledge of the men with whom one has to deal, and of the motives which actuate them. In other words, before taking any active steps, we had to "size up" our fellow-legislators to find out their past history and present character and associates, to find out whether they were their own masters or were acting under the directions of somebody else, whether they were bright or stupid, etc. As a result, and after very careful study, conducted purely with the object of learning the truth, so that we might work more effectually, we came to the conclusion that about a third of the members were open to corrupt influences in some form or other; in certain sessions the proportion was greater and in some less. Now, it would, of course, be impossible for me or for any one else to prove in a court of law that these men were guilty, except, perhaps, in two or three cases; yet we felt absolutely confident that there was hardly a case in which our judgment as to the honesty of any given member was not correct. The two or three exceptional cases alluded to, where legal proof of guilt might have been forthcoming, were instances in which honest men were approached

by their colleagues at times when the need for votes was very great; but, even then, it would have been almost impossible to punish the offenders before a court, for it would have merely resulted in his denying what his accuser stated. Moreover, the members who had been approached would have been very reluctant to come forward, for each of them felt ashamed that his character should not have been well enough known to prevent any one's daring to speak to him on such a subject. And another reason why the few honest men who are approached (for the lobbyist rarely makes a mistake in his estimate of the men who will be apt to take bribes) do not feel like taking action in the matter is that a doubtful lawsuit will certainly follow, which will drag on so long that the public will come to regard all of the participants with equal distrust, while in the end the decision is quite as likely to be against as to be for them. Take the Bradly–Sessions case, for example. This was an incident that occurred at the time of the faction-fight in the Republican ranks over the return of Mr. Conkling to the United States Senate after his resignation from that body. Bradly, an Assemblyman, accused Sessions, a State Senator, of attempting to bribe him. The affair dragged on for an indefinite time; no one was able actually to determine whether it was a case of blackmail on the one hand or of bribery

on the other; the vast majority of people recollected the names of both parties, but totally forgot which it was that was supposed to have bribed the other, and regarded both with equal disfavor; and the upshot has been that the case is now merely remembered as illustrating one of the most unsavory phases of the once-famous Halfbreed-Stalwart fight.

### *Difficulties of Preventing and Punishing Corruption*

From the causes indicated, it is almost impossible to actually convict a legislator of bribe-taking; but at the same time, the character of a legislator, if bad, soon becomes a matter of common notoriety, and no dishonest legislator can long keep his reputation good with honest men. If the constituents wish to know the character of their member they can easily find it out, and no member will be dishonest if he thinks his constituents are looking at him; he presumes upon their ignorance or indifference. I do not see how bribe-taking among legislators can be stopped until the public conscience becomes awake to the matter. Then it will stop fast enough; for just as soon as politicians realize that the people are in earnest in wanting a thing done, they make haste to do it. The trouble is always in rousing the people sufficiently to make them take an

*effective* interest,—that is, in making them sufficiently in earnest to be willing to give a little of their time to the accomplishment of the object they have in view.

Much the largest percentage of corrupt legislators come from the great cities; indeed, the majority of the assemblymen from the great cities are "very poor specimens" indeed, while, on the contrary, the Congressmen who go from them are generally pretty good men. This fact is only one of the many which go to establish the curious political law that in a great city the larger the constituency which elects a public servant, the more apt that servant is to be a good one; exactly as the mayor is almost certain to be infinitely superior in character to the average alderman, or the average city judge to the average civil justice. This is because the public servants of comparatively small importance are protected by their own insignificance from the consequences of their bad actions. Life is carried on at such a high pressure in the great cities, men's time is so fully occupied by their manifold and harassing interests and duties, and their knowledge of their neighbors is necessarily so limited, that they are only able to fix in their minds the characters and records of a few prominent men; the others they lump together without distinguishing between individuals. They know whether the aldermen, as

a body, are to be admired or despised; but they probably do not even know the name, far less the worth, of the particular alderman who represents their district; so it happens that their votes for aldermen or assemblymen are generally given with very little intelligence indeed, while, on the contrary, they are fully competent to pass and execute judgment upon as prominent an official as a mayor or even a congressman. Hence it follows that the latter have to give a good deal of attention to the wishes and prejudices of the public at large, while a city assemblyman, though he always talks a great deal about the people, rarely, except in certain extraordinary cases, has to pay much heed to their wants. His political future depends far more upon the skill and success with which he cultivates the good-will of certain "bosses," or of certain cliques of politicians, or even of certain bodies and knots of men (such as compose a trade-union, or a collection of merchants in some special business, or the managers of a railroad) whose interests, being vitally affected by Albany legislation, oblige them closely to watch, and to try to punish or reward, the Albany legislators. These politicians or sets of interested individuals generally care very little for a man's honesty so long as he can be depended upon to do as they wish on certain occasions; and hence it often happens that a dishonest man who has sense

enough not to excite attention by any flagrant outrage may continue for a number of years to represent an honest constituency.

### *The Constituents Largely to Blame*

Moreover, a member from a large city can often count upon the educated and intelligent men of his district showing the most gross ignorance and stupidity in political affairs. The much-lauded intelligent voter—the man of cultured mind, liberal education, and excellent intentions—at times performs exceedingly queer antics.

The great public meetings to advance certain political movements irrespective of party, which have been held so frequently during the past few years, have undoubtedly done a vast amount of good; but the very men who attend these public meetings and inveigh against the folly and wickedness of the politicians will sometimes on election day do things which have quite as evil effects as any of the acts of the men whom they very properly condemn. A recent instance of this is worth giving. In 1882 there was in the Assembly a young member from New York, who did as hard and effective work for the city of New York as has ever been done by any one. It was a peculiarly disagreeable year to be in the Legislature. The composition of that body was unusually bad. The more disreputable politicians relied upon it

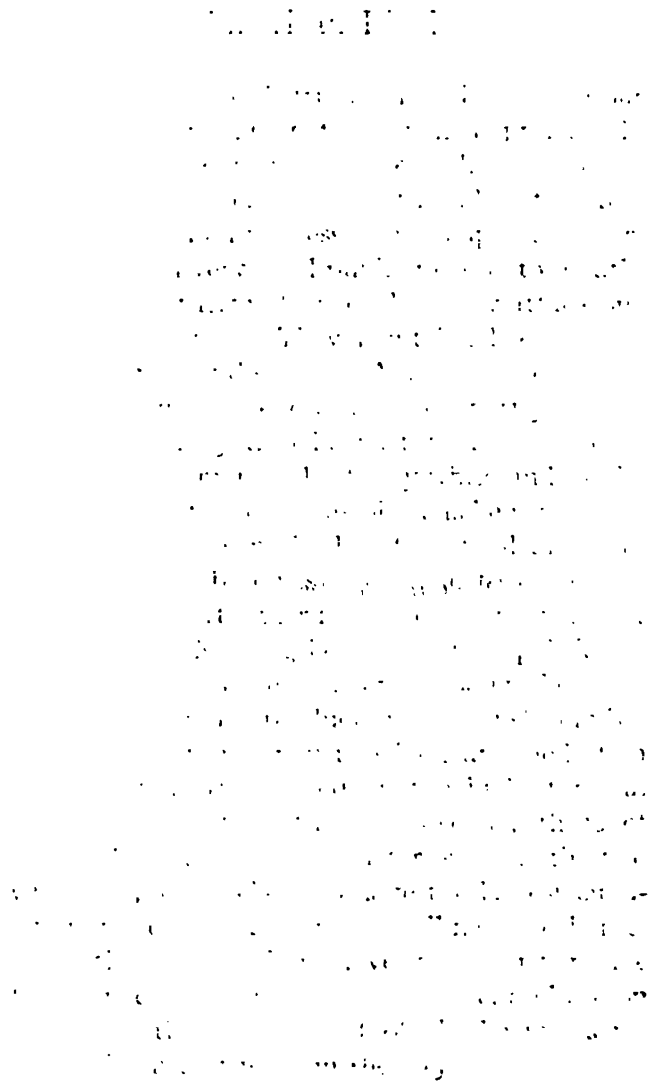
to pass some of their schemes and to protect certain of their members from the consequences of their own misdeeds. Demagogic measures were continually brought forward, nominally in the interests of the laboring classes, for which an honest and intelligent man could not vote, and yet which were jealously watched by, and received the hearty support of, not mere demagogues and agitators, but also a large number of perfectly honest though misguided workingmen. And, finally, certain wealthy corporations attempted, by the most unscrupulous means, to rush through a number of laws in their own interest. The young member of whom we are speaking incurred by his course on these various measures the bitter hostility alike of the politicians, the demagogues, and the members of that most dangerous of all classes—the wealthy criminal class. He had also earned the gratitude of all honest citizens, and he got it—as far as words went. The better class of newspapers spoke well of him; cultured and intelligent men generally—the well-to-do, prosperous people who belonged to the different social and literary clubs, and their followers—were loud in his praise. I call to mind one man who lived in his district who expressed great indignation that the politicians should dare to oppose his re-election; when told that it was to be hoped he would help to insure the legislator's return to Albany by himself

staying at the polls all day, he answered that he was very sorry, but he unfortunately had an engagement to go quail-shooting on election day! Most respectable people, however, would undoubtedly have voted for and re-elected the young member had it not been for the unexpected political movements that took place in the fall. A citizen's ticket, largely non-partisan in character, was run for certain local offices, receiving its support from among those who claimed to be, and who undoubtedly were, the best men of both parties. The ticket contained the names of candidates only for municipal offices, and had nothing whatever to do with the election of men to the Legislature; yet it proved absolutely impossible to drill this simple fact through the heads of a great many worthy people, who, when election day came round, declined to vote anything but the citizens' ticket and persisted in thinking that if no legislative candidate was on the ticket it was because, for some reason or other, the citizens' committee did not consider any legislative candidate worth voting for. All over the city the better class of candidates for legislative offices lost from this cause votes which they had a right to expect, and in the particular district under consideration the loss was so great as to cause the defeat of the sitting member, or rather to elect him by so narrow a vote as to enable an unscrupu-

lously partisan legislative majority to keep him out of his seat.

It is this kind of ignorance of the simplest political matters among really good citizens, combined with their timidity, which is so apt to characterize a wealthy *bourgeoisie*, and with their short-sighted selfishness in being unwilling to take the smallest portion of time away from their business or pleasure to devote to public affairs, which renders it so easy for corrupt men from the city to keep their places in the Legislature. In the country the case is different. Here the constituencies, who are usually composed of honest though narrow-minded and bigoted individuals, generally keep a pretty sharp lookout on their members, and, as already said, the latter are apt to be fairly honest men. Even when they are not honest, they take good care to act perfectly well as regards all district matters, for most of the measures about which corrupt influences are at work relate to city affairs. The constituents of a country member know well how to judge him for those of his acts which immediately affect themselves; but as regards others they often have no means of forming an opinion, except through the newspapers,—more especially through the great metropolitan newspapers,—and they have gradually come to look upon all statements made by the latter with reference to the honesty or dishonesty of public

men with extreme distrust. This is because our newspapers, including those which professedly stand as representatives of the highest culture of the community, have been in the habit of making such constant and reckless assaults upon the characters of even very good public men as to greatly detract from their influence when they attack one who is really bad. They paint black every one with whom they disagree. As a consequence, the average man, who knows they are partly wrong, thinks they may also be partly right; he concludes that no man is absolutely white and at the same time that no one is as black as he is painted; and takes refuge in the belief that all alike are gray. It then becomes impossible to rouse him to make an effort either for a good man or against a scoundrel. Nothing helps dishonest politicians as much as this feeling; and among the chief instruments in its production we must number certain of our newspapers which are loudest in asserting that they stand on the highest moral plane. As for the other newspapers, those of frankly "sensational" character, such as the two which at present claim to have the largest circulation in New York, there is small need to characterize them; they form a very great promotive to public corruption and private vice, and are on the whole the most potent of all the forces for evil which are at work in the city.



*Perils of Legislative Life*

However, there can be no question that a great many men do deteriorate very much morally when they go to Albany. The last accusation most of us would think of bringing against that dear, dull, old Dutch city is that of being a fast place; and yet there are plenty of members coming from out-of-the-way villages or quiet country towns on whom Albany has as bad an effect as Paris sometimes has on wealthy young Americans from the great seaboard cities. Many men go to the Legislature with the set purpose of making money; but many others, who afterwards become bad, go there intending to do good work. These latter may be well-meaning, weak young fellows of some shallow brightness, who expect to make names for themselves; perhaps they are young lawyers, or real-estate brokers, or small shopkeepers; they achieve but little success; they gradually become conscious that their business is broken up and that they have not enough ability to warrant any expectation of their continuing in public life; some great temptation comes in their way (a corporation which expects to be relieved of, perhaps, a million dollars of taxes by the passage of a bill can afford to pay high for voters); they fall, and that is the end of them. Indeed, legislative life has temptations enough to make it

unadvisable for any weak man, whether young or old, to enter it.

### *Allies of Vicious Legislators*

The array of vicious legislators is swelled by a number of men who really at bottom are not bad. Foremost among these are those most hopeless of beings who are handicapped by having some measure which they consider it absolutely necessary for the sake of their own future to "get through." One of these men will have a bill, for instance, appropriating a sum of money from the State treasury to clear out a river, dam the outlet of a lake, or drain a marsh; it may be, although not usually so, proper enough in itself, but it is drawn up primarily in the interest of a certain set of his constituents who have given him clearly to understand that his continuance in their good graces depends upon his success in passing the bill. He feels that he must get it through at all hazards; the bad men find this out and tell him he must count on their opposition unless he consents also to help their measures; he resists at first, but sooner or later yields; and from that moment his fate is sealed,—so far as his ability to do any work of general good is concerned.

A still larger number of men are good enough in themselves, but are "owned" by third parties.

Usually, the latter are politicians who have absolute control of the district machine, or who are, at least, of very great importance in the political affairs of their district. A curious fact is that they are not invariably, though usually, of the same party as the member; for in some places, especially in the lower portions of the great cities, politics become purely a business, and in the squabbles for offices of emolument it becomes important for a local leader to have supporters among all the factions. When one of these supporters is sent to a legislative body, he is allowed to act with the rest of his party on what his chief regards as the unimportant questions of party or public interest, but he has to come in to heel at once when any matter arises touching the said chief's power, pocket, or influence.

Other members will be controlled by some wealthy private citizen who is not in politics, but who has business interests likely to be affected by legislation, and who is therefore willing to subscribe heavily to the campaign expenses of an individual or of an association, so as to insure the presence in Albany of some one who will give him information and assistance.

On one occasion there came before a committee of which I happened to be a member a perfectly proper bill in the interest of a certain corporation; the majority of the committee, six in number,

were thoroughly bad men, who opposed the measure with the hope of being paid to cease their opposition. When I consented to take charge of the bill I had stipulated that not a penny should be paid to insure its passage. It therefore became necessary to see what pressure could be brought to bear on the recalcitrant members; and, accordingly, we had to find out who were the authors and sponsors of their political being. Three proved to be under the control of local statesmen of the same party as themselves and of equally bad moral character; one was ruled by a politician of unsavory reputation from a different city; the fifth, a Democrat, was owned by a Republican Federal official; and the sixth by the president of a horse-car company. A couple of letters from these two magnates forced the last members mentioned to change front on the bill with surprising alacrity.

Nowadays, however, the greatest danger is that the member will be a servile tool of the "boss" or "machine" of his own party, in which case he can very rarely indeed be a good public servant.

There are two classes of cases in which corrupt members get money. One is when a wealthy corporation buys through some measure which will be of great benefit to itself, although, perhaps an injury to the public at large; the other is when a member introduces a bill hostile to some moneyed

interest, with the expectation of being paid to let the matter drop. The latter, technically called a "strike," is much the most common; for, in spite of the outcry against them in legislative matters, corporations are more often sinned against than sinning. It is difficult, for reasons already given, in either case to convict the offending member, though we have very good laws against bribery. The reform has got to come from the people at large. It will be hard to make any very great improvement in the character of the legislators until respectable people become more fully awake to their duties, and until the newspapers become more truthful and less reckless in their statements.

It is not a pleasant task to have to draw one side of legislative life in such dark colors; but as the side exists, and as the dark lines never can be rubbed out until we have manfully acknowledged that they are there and need rubbing out, it seems the falsest of false delicacy to refrain from dwelling upon them. But it would be most unjust to accept this partial truth as being the whole truth. We blame the Legislature for many evils, the ultimate cause for whose existence is to be found in our own shortcomings.

### *The Other Side of the Picture*

There is a much brighter side to the picture, and this is the larger side, too. It would be

impossible to get together a body of more earnest, upright, and disinterested men than the band of legislators, largely young men, who during the past three years have averted so much evil and accomplished so much good at Albany. They were able, at least partially, to put into actual practice the theories that had long been taught by the intellectual leaders of the country. And the life of a legislator who is earnest in his efforts faithfully to perform his duty as a public servant, is harassing and laborious to the last degree. He is kept at work from eight to fourteen hours a day; he is obliged to incur the bitterest hostility of a body of men as powerful as they are unscrupulous, who are always on the watch to find out, or to make out, anything in his private or his public life which can be used against him; and he has on his side either a but partially roused public opinion, or else a public opinion roused, it is true, but only blindly conscious of the evil from which it suffers, and alike ignorant and unwilling to avail itself of the proper remedy.

This body of legislators, who, at any rate, worked honestly for what they thought right, were as a whole, quite unselfish, and were not treated particularly well by their constituents. Most of them soon got to realize the fact that if they wished to enjoy their brief space of political life

(and most, though not all of them, did enjoy it) they would have to make it a rule never to consider, in deciding how to vote upon any question, how their vote would affect their own political prospects. No man can do good service in the Legislature as long as he is worrying over the effect of his actions upon his own future. After having learned this, most of them got on very happily indeed. As a rule, and where no matter of vital principle is involved, a member is bound to represent the views of those who have elected him; but there are times when the voice of the people is anything but the voice of God, and then a conscientious man is equally bound to disregard it.

In the long run, and on the average, the public will usually do justice to its representatives; but it is a very rough, uneven, and long-delayed justice. That is, judging from what I have myself seen of the way in which members were treated by their constituents, I should say that the chances of an honest man being retained in public life were about ten per cent. better than if he were dishonest, other things being equal. This is not a showing very creditable to us as a people; and the explanation is to be found in the shortcomings peculiar to the different classes of our honest and respectable voters,—shortcomings which may be briefly outlined.

### *Shortcomings of the People who should Take Part in Political Work*

The people of means in all great cities have in times past shamefully neglected their political duties and have been contemptuously disregarded by the professional politicians in consequence. A number of them will get together in a large hall, will vociferously demand "reform," as if it were some concrete substance which could be handed out to them in slices, and will then disband with a feeling of the most serene self-satisfaction and the belief that they have done their entire duty as citizens and members of the community. It is an actual fact that four out of five of our wealthy and educated men, of those who occupy what is called good social position, are really ignorant of the nature of a caucus or a primary meeting, and never attend either. Now, under our form of government, no man can accomplish anything by himself; he must work in combination with others, and the men of whom we are speaking will never carry their proper weight in the political affairs of the country until they have formed themselves into some organization, or else, which would be better, have joined some of the organizations already existing. But there seems often to be a certain lack of the robuster virtues in our educated men, which makes them shrink from the

struggle and the inevitable contact with rough politicians (who must often be rudely handled before they can be forced to behave); while their lack of familiarity with their surroundings causes them to lack discrimination between the politicians who are decent and those who are not; for in their eyes the two classes, both equally unfamiliar, are indistinguishable. Another reason why this class is not of more consequence in politics is that it is often really out of sympathy—or, at least, its more conspicuous members are—with the feelings and interests of the great mass of the American people; and it is a discreditable fact that it is in this class that what has been most aptly termed the "colonial" spirit still survives. Until this survival of the spirit of colonial dependence is dead, those in whom it exists will serve chiefly as laughing-stocks to the shrewd, humorous, and prejudiced people who form nine tenths of our body-politic, and whose chief characteristics are their intensely American habits of thought and their surly intolerance of anything like subservience to outside and foreign influences.

From different causes the laboring classes, even when thoroughly honest at heart, often fail to appreciate honesty in their representatives. They are frequently not well informed in regard to the character of the latter, and they are apt to be led aside by the loud professions of the so-called

labor reformers, who are always promising to procure by legislation the advantages which can only come to workingmen, or to any other men, by their individual or united energy, intelligence, and forethought. Very much has been accomplished by legislation for laboring men, by procuring mechanics' lien laws, factory laws, etc.; and hence it often comes that they think legislation can accomplish all things for them; and it is only natural, for instance, that a certain proportion of their number should adhere to the demagogue who votes for a law to double the rate of wages rather than to the honest man who opposes it. When people are struggling for the necessaries of existence and vaguely feel, no matter how wrongly, that they are also struggling against an unjustly ordered system of life, it is hard to convince them of the truth that an ounce of performance on their own part is worth a ton of legislative promises to change in some mysterious manner that life-system.

In the country districts justice to a member is somewhat more apt to be done. When, as is so often the case, it is not done, the cause is usually to be sought for in the numerous petty jealousies and local rivalries which are certain to exist in any small community whose interests are narrow and most of whose members are acquainted with each other; and, besides this, our country vote is

essentially a Bourbon or Tory vote, being very slow to receive new ideas, very tenacious of old ones, and hence inclined to look with suspicion upon any one who tries to shape his course according to some standard differing from that which is already in existence.

The actual work of procuring the passage of a bill through the Legislature is in itself far from slight. The hostility of the actively bad has to be discounted in advance, and the indifference of the passive majority, who are neither very good nor very bad, has to be overcome. This can usually be accomplished only by stirring up their constituencies; and so, besides the constant watchfulness over the course of the measure through both houses and the continual debating and parliamentary fencing which is necessary, it is also indispensable to get the people of districts not directly affected by the bill alive to its importance, so as to induce their representatives to vote for it. Thus, when the bill to establish a State Park at Niagara was on its passage, it was found that the great majority of the country members were opposed to it, fearing that it might conceal some land-jobbing scheme, and also fearing that their constituents, whose vice is not extravagance, would not countenance so great an expenditure of public money. It was of no use arguing with the members, and instead the country

newspapers were flooded with letters, pamphlets were circulated, visits and personal appeals were made, until a sufficient number of these members changed front to enable us to get the lacking votes.

### *Life in the Legislature*

As already said, some of us who usually acted together took a great deal of genuine enjoyment out of our experience at Albany. We liked the excitement and perpetual conflict, the necessity for putting forth all our powers to reach our ends, and the feeling that we were really being of some use in the world; and if we were often both saddened and angered by the viciousness and ignorance of some of our colleagues, yet, in return, the latter many times unwittingly furnished us a good deal of amusement by their preposterous actions and speeches. Some of these are worth repeating, though they can never, in repetition, seem what they were when they occurred. The names and circumstances, of course, have been so changed as to prevent the possibility of the real heroes of them being recognized. It must be understood that they stand for the exceptional and not the ordinary workings of the average legislative intellect. I have heard more sound sense than foolishness talked in Albany, but to record the former would only bore the reader. And we must bear in mind that while the igno-

rance of some of our representatives warrants our saying that they should not be in the Legislature, it does not at all warrant our condemning the system of government which permits them to be sent there. There is no system so good that it has not some disadvantages. The only way to teach our foreign-born fellow-citizens how to govern themselves is to give each the full rights possessed by other American citizens; and it is not to be wondered at if they at first show themselves unskilful in the exercise of these rights. It has been my experience, moreover, in the Legislature, that when Hans or Paddy does turn out really well, there are very few native Americans indeed who do better. A very large number of the ablest and most disinterested and public-spirited citizens in New York are by birth Germans; and their names are towers of strength in the community. When I had to name a committee which was to do the most difficult, dangerous, and important work that came before the Legislature at all during my presence in it, I chose three of my four colleagues from among those of my fellow-legislators who were Irish either by birth or descent. One of the warmest and most disinterested friends I have ever had or hope to have in New York politics is by birth an Irishman, and is also as genuine and good an American citizen as is to be found within the United States.

A good many of the Yankees in the house would blunder time and again; but their blunders were generally merely stupid and not at all amusing, while, on the contrary, the errors of those who were of Milesian extraction always possessed a most refreshing originality.

### *Incidents of Legislative Experience*

In 1882 the Democrats in the house had a clear majority, but were for a long time unable to effect an organization, owing to a faction-fight in their own ranks between the Tammany and anti-Tammany members, each side claiming the lion's share of the spoils. After a good deal of bickering, the anti-Tammany men drew up a paper containing a series of propositions, and submitted it to their opponents, with the prefatory remark, in writing, that it was an *ultimatum*. The Tammany members were at once summoned to an indignation meeting, their feelings closely resembling those of the famous fish-wife who was called a parallelopipedon. None of them had any very accurate idea as to what the word *ultimatum* meant; but that it was intensely offensive, not to say abusive, in its nature, they did not question for a moment. It was felt that some equivalent and equally strong term by which to call Tammany's proposed counter-address must be found immediately; but, as

the Latin vocabulary of the members was limited, it was some time before a suitable term was forthcoming. Finally, by a happy inspiration, some gentlemen of classical education remembered the phrase *ipse dixit*; it was at once felt to be the very phrase required by the peculiar exigencies of the case, and next day the reply appeared, setting forth with well-satisfied gravity that, in response to the County Democracy's "*ultimatum*," Tammany herewith produced her "*ipse dixit*."

Public servants of higher grade than aldermen or assemblymen sometimes give words a wider meaning than would be found in the dictionary. In many parts of the United States, owing to a curious series of historical associations (which, by the way, it would be interesting to trace), anything foreign and un-English is called "Dutch," and it was in this sense that a member of a recent Congress used the term when, in speaking in favor of a tariff on works of art, he told of the reluctance with which he saw the productions of native artists exposed to competition "with Dutch daubs from Italy"; a sentence pleasing alike from its alliteration and from its bold disregard of geographic trivialities.

Often an orator of this sort will have his attention attracted by some high-sounding word, which he has not before seen, and which he treasures up to use in his next rhetorical flight, without regard

to the exact meaning. There was a laboring man's advocate in the last Legislature, one of whose efforts attracted a good deal of attention from his magnificent heedlessness of technical accuracy in the use of similes. He was speaking against the convict contract-labor system, and wound up an already sufficiently remarkable oration with the still more startling ending that the system "was a vital cobra which was swamping the lives of the laboring men." Now, he had evidently carefully put together the sentence beforehand, and the process of mental synthesis by which he built it up must have been curious. "Vital" was, of course, used merely as an adjective of intensity; he was a little uncertain in his ideas as to what a "cobra" was, but took it for granted that it was some terrible manifestation of nature, possibly hostile to man, like a volcano, or a cyclone, or Niagara, for instance; then "swamping" was chosen as describing an operation very likely to be performed by Niagara, or a cyclone, or a cobra; and behold, the sentence was complete.

Sometimes a common phrase will be given a new meaning. Thus, the mass of legislation is strictly local in its character. Over a thousand bills come up for consideration in the course of a session, but a very few of which affect the interests of the State at large. The latter and the more important private bills are, or ought to be,

carefully studied by each member; but it is a physical impossibility for any one man to examine the countless local bills of small importance. For these we have to trust to the member for the district affected, and when one comes up the response to any inquiry about it is usually, "Oh, it's a local bill, affecting So-and-so's district; he is responsible for it." By degrees, some of the members get to use "local" in the sense of unimportant, and a few of the assemblymen of doubtful honesty gradually come to regard it as meaning a bill of no pecuniary interest to themselves. There was a smug little rascal in one of the last Legislatures who might have come out of one of Lever's novels. He was undoubtedly a bad case, but had a genuine sense of humor, and his "bulls" made him the delight of the house. One day I came in late, just as a bill was being voted on, and, meeting my friend, hailed him, "Hello, Pat, what's up? what's this they're voting on?" to which Pat replied, with contemptuous indifference to the subject, but with a sly twinkle in his eye, "Oh, some unimportant measure, sorr; some local bill or other—*a constitutional amendment!*"

The old Dublin Parliament never listened to a better specimen of a bull than was contained in the speech of a very genial and pleasant friend of mine, a really finished orator, who, in the excitement attendant upon receiving Governor

Cleveland's message vetoing the five-cent-fare bill, uttered the following sentence: "Mr. Speaker, I recognize the hand that crops out in that veto; *I have heard it before!*"

One member rather astonished us one day by his use of the word "shibboleth." He had evidently concluded that this was merely a more elegant synonym of the good old word "shillalah," and, in reproving a colleague for opposing a bill to increase the salaries of public laborers, he said, very impressively, "The throuble wid the young man is, that he uses the wurrd 'economy' as a shibboleth, wherewith to strike the workingman." Afterwards he changed the metaphor, and spoke of a number of us as using the word "reform" as a shibboleth behind which to cloak our evil intentions.

A mixture of classical and constitutional misinformation was displayed a few sessions past in the State Assembly when I was a member of the Legislature. It was on the occasion of that annual nuisance, the debate upon the Catholic Protectory item of the Supply Bill. Every year some one who is desirous of bidding for the Catholic vote introduces this bill, which appropriates a sum of varying dimensions for the support of the Catholic Protectory, an excellent institution, but one which has no right whatever to come to the State for support; each year the insertion of the

item is opposed by a small number of men, including the more liberal Catholics themselves, on proper grounds, and by a larger number from simple bigotry—a fact which was shown two years ago, when many of the most bitter opponents of this measure cheerfully supported a similar and equally objectionable one in aid of a Protestant institution. On the occasion referred to there were two assemblymen, both Celtic gentlemen, who were rivals for the leadership of the minority; one of them a stout, red-faced man, who may go by the name of the "Colonel," owing to his having seen service in the army; while the other was a dapper, voluble fellow, who had at one time been a civil justice and was called the "Judge." Somebody was opposing the insertion of the item on the ground (perfectly just, by the way) that it was unconstitutional, and he dwelt upon this objection at some length. The Judge, who knew nothing of the constitution, except that it was continually being quoted against all of his favorite projects, fidgeted about for some time and at last jumped up to know if he might ask the gentleman a question. The latter said, "Yes"; and the Judge went on, "I'd like to know if the gintleman has ever personally seen the Catholic Protectoree?" "No, I have n't," said his astonished opponent. "Then phwat do you mane by talking about its being unconstitootional? It's no more

unconstitootional than you are!" Then, turning to the house, with slow and withering sarcasm, he added, "The throuble wid the gintleman is that he okkipies what lawyers would call a kind of a quasi-position upon this bill," and sat down amid the applause of his followers.

His rival, the Colonel, felt he had gained altogether too much glory from the encounter, and after the nonplussed countryman had taken his seat, he stalked solemnly over to the desk of the elated Judge, looked at him majestically for a moment, and said, "You'll excuse my mentioning, sorr, that the gintleman who has just sat down knows more law in a wake than you do in a month; and more than that, Mike Shaunnessy, phwat do you mane by quotin' Latin on the flure of this house, *when you don't know the alpha and omayga of the language!*" and back he walked, leaving the Judge in humiliated submission behind him.

The Judge was always falling foul of the Constitution. Once, when defending one of his bills which made a small but wholly indefensible appropriation of State money for a private purpose, he asserted "that the Constitution did n't touch little things like that"; and on another occasion he remarked to me that he "never allowed the Constitution to come between friends."

The Colonel was at that time chairman of a committee, before which there sometimes came

questions affecting the interests or supposed interests of labor. The committee was hopelessly bad in its composition, most of the members being either very corrupt or exceedingly inefficient. The Colonel generally kept order with a good deal of dignity; indeed, when, as not infrequently happened, he had looked upon the rye that was flavored with lemon-peel, his sense of personal dignity grew till it became fairly majestic, and he ruled the committee with a rod of iron. At one time a bill had been introduced (one of the several score of preposterous measures that annually make their appearance purely for purposes of buncombe), by whose terms all laborers in the public works of great cities were to receive three dollars a day—double the market price of labor. To this bill, by the way, an amendment was afterwards offered in the house by some gentleman with a sense of humor, which was to make it read that all the inhabitants of great cities were to receive three dollars a day and the privilege of laboring on the public works if they chose; the original author of the bill questioning doubtfully if the amendment "did n't make the measure too sweeping." The measure was, of course, of no consequence whatever to the genuine laboring men, but was of interest to the professional labor agitators; and a body of the latter requested leave to appear before the committee. This was

granted, but on the appointed day the chairman turned up in a condition of such portentous dignity as to make it evident that he had been on a spree of protracted duration. Down he sat at the head of the table and glared at the committeemen, while the latter, whose faces would not have looked amiss in a rogue's gallery, cowered before him. The first speaker was a typical professional laboring man; a sleek, oily, little fellow, with a black mustache, who had never done a stroke of work in his life. He felt confident that the Colonel would favor him,—a confidence soon to be rudely shaken,—and began with a deprecatory smile:

"Humble though I am——"

Rap, rap, went the chairman's gavel, and the following dialogue occurred:

*Chairman* (with dignity). "What's that you said you were, sir?"

*Professional Workman* (decidedly taken aback). "I—I said I was humble, sir!"

*Chairman* (reproachfully). "Are you an American citizen, sir?"

*P. W.* "Yes, sir."

*Chairman* (with emphasis). "Then you're the equal of any man in this State! Then you're the equal of any man on this committee! *Don't let me hear you call yourself humble again! Go on, sir!*"

After this warning the advocate managed to keep clear of the rocks until, having worked himself up to quite a pitch of excitement, he incautiously exclaimed, "But the poor man has no friends!" which brought the Colonel down on him at once. Rap, rap, went his gavel, and he scowled grimly at the offender while he asked with deadly deliberation:

"What did you say that time, sir?"

*P. W.* (hopelessly). "I said the poor man had no friends, sir."

*Chairman* (with sudden fire). "Then you lied, sir! I am the poor man's friend! so are my colleagues, sir!" (Here the rogues' gallery tried to look benevolent.) "Speak the truth, sir!" (with sudden change from the manner admonitory to the manner mandatory). "Now, you sit down quick, or get out of this somehow!"

This put an end to the sleek gentleman, and his place was taken by a fellow-professional of another type—a great, burly man, who would talk to you on private matters in a perfectly natural tone of voice, but who, the moment he began to speak of the Wrongs (with a capital W) of Labor (with a capital L), bellowed as if he had been a bull of Bashan. The Colonel, by this time pretty far gone, eyed him malevolently, swaying to and fro in his chair. However, the first effect of the fellow's oratory was soothing rather than

otherwise, and produced the unexpected result of sending the chairman fast asleep sitting bolt upright. But in a minute or two, as the man warmed up to his work, he gave a peculiarly resonant howl which waked the Colonel up. The latter came to himself with a jerk, looked fixedly at the audience, caught sight of the speaker, remembered having seen him before, forgot that he had been asleep, and concluded that it must have been on some previous day. Hammer, hammer, went the gavel, and—

"I've seen you before, sir!"

"You have not," said the man.

"Don't tell me I lie, sir!" responded the Colonel, with sudden ferocity. "You've addressed this committee on a previous day!"

"I've never—" began the man; but the Colonel broke in again:

"Sit down, sir! The dignity of the chair must be preserved! No man shall speak to this committee twice. The committee stands adjourned." And with that he stalked majestically out of the room, leaving the committee and delegation to gaze sheepishly into each other's faces.

### *Outsiders*

After all, outsiders furnish quite as much fun as the legislators themselves. The number of men

who persist in writing one letters of praise, abuse, and advice on every conceivable subject is appalling; and the writers are of every grade, from the lunatic and the criminal up. The most difficult to deal with are the men with hobbies. There is the Protestant fool, who thinks that our liberties are menaced by the machinations of the Church of Rome; and his companion idiot, who wants legislation against all secret societies, especially the Masons. Then there are the believers in "isms" of whom the woman-suffragists stand in the first rank. Now, I have always been a believer in woman's rights, but I must confess I have never seen such a hopelessly impracticable set of persons as the woman-suffragists who came up to Albany to get legislation. They simply would not draw up their measures in proper form; when I pointed out to one of them that their proposed bill was drawn up in direct defiance of certain of the sections of the Constitution of the State he blandly replied that he did not care at all for that, because the measure had been drawn up so as to be in accord with the Constitution of Heaven. There was no answer to this beyond the very obvious one that Albany was in no way akin to Heaven. The ultra-temperance people—not the moderate and sensible ones—are quite as impervious to common sense.

A member's correspondence is sometimes amus-

ing. A member receives shoals of letters of advice, congratulation, entreaty, and abuse, half of them anonymous. Most of these are stupid; but some are at least out of the common.

I had some constant correspondents. One lady in the western part of the State wrote me a weekly disquisition on woman's rights. A Buffalo clergyman spent two years on a one-sided correspondence about prohibition. A gentleman of Syracuse wrote me such a stream of essays and requests about the charter of that city that I feared he would drive me into a lunatic asylum; but he anticipated matters by going into one himself. A New Yorker at regular intervals sent up a request that I would "reintroduce" the Dongan charter, which had lapsed two centuries before. A gentleman interested in a proposed law to protect primaries took to telegraphing daily questions as to its progress—a habit of which I broke him by sending in response telegrams of several hundred words each, which I was careful not to prepay.

There are certain legislative actions which must be taken in a purely Pickwickian sense. Notable among these are the resolutions of sympathy for the alleged oppressed patriots and peoples of Europe. These are generally directed against England, as there exists in the lower strata of political life an Anglophobia quite as objectionable as the Anglomania of the higher social circles.

As a rule, these resolutions are to be classed as simply *bouffe* affairs; they are commonly introduced by some ambitious legislator—often, I regret to say, a native American—who has a large foreign vote in his district. During my term of service in the Legislature, resolutions were introduced demanding the recall of Minister Lowell, assailing the Czar for his conduct towards the Russian Jews, sympathizing with the Land League and the Dutch Boers, etc.; the passage of each of which we strenuously and usually successfully opposed, on the ground that while we would warmly welcome any foreigner who came here and in good faith assumed the duties of American citizenship, we had a right to demand in return that he should not bring any of his race or national antipathies into American political life. Resolutions of this character are sometimes undoubtedly proper; but in nine cases out of ten they are wholly unjustifiable. An instance of this sort of thing which took place not at Albany may be cited. Recently the Board of Aldermen of one of our great cities received a stinging rebuke, which it is to be feared the aldermanic intellect was too dense fully to appreciate. The aldermen passed a resolution "condemning" the Czar of Russia for his conduct towards his fellow-citizens of Hebrew faith and "demanding" that he should forthwith treat them better; this was forwarded

to the Russian Minister, with a request that it be sent to the Czar. It came back forty-eight hours afterwards, with a note on the back by one of the under-secretaries of the legation to the effect that as he was not aware that Russia had any diplomatic relations with this particular Board of Aldermen and as, indeed, Russia was not officially cognizant of their existence, and, moreover, was wholly indifferent to their opinions on any conceivable subject, he herewith returned them their kind communication.[1]

In concluding, I would say that while there is so much evil at Albany, and so much reason for our exerting ourselves to bring about a better state of things, yet there is no cause for being disheartened or for thinking that it is hopeless to expect improvement. On the contrary, the standard of legislative morals is certainly higher than it was fifteen years ago or twenty-five years ago. In the future it may either improve or retrograde, by fits and starts, for it will keep pace exactly

[1] A few years later a member of the Italian Legation "scored" heavily on one of our least pleasant national peculiarities. An Italian had just been lynched in Colorado, and an Italian paper in New York bitterly denounced the Italian Minister for his supposed apathy in the matter. The member of the Legation in question answered that the accusations were most unjust, for the Minister had worked zealously until he found that the deceased "had taken out his naturalization papers, and was entitled to all the privileges of American citizenship."

with the awakening of the popular mind to the necessity of having honest and intelligent representatives in the State Legislature.[1]

I have had opportunity of knowing something about the workings of but a few of our other State legislatures: from what I have seen and heard, I should say that we stand about on a par with those of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Illinois; above that of Louisiana; and below those of Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Wyoming, as well as below the national Legislature at Washington. But the moral status of a legislative body, especially in the West, often varies widely from year to year.

[1] At present, twelve years later, I should say that there was rather less personal corruption in the Legislature; but also less independence and greater subservience to the machine, which is even less responsive to honest and enlightened public opinion.

# CHAPTER VI

## MACHINE POLITICS IN NEW YORK CITY [1]

IN New York City, as in most of our other great municipalities, the direction of political affairs has been for many years mainly in the hands of a class of men who make politics their regular business and means of livelihood. These men are able to keep their grip only by means of the singularly perfect way in which they have succeeded in organizing their respective parties and factions; and it is in consequence of the clockwork regularity and efficiency with which these several organizations play their parts, alike for good and for evil, that they have been nicknamed by outsiders "machines," while the men who take part in the control, or, as they would themselves say, "run" them, now form a well-recognized and fairly well-defined class in the community, and are familiarly known as machine politicians. It may be of interest to sketch in outline some of the characteristics of these men and of their machines, the methods by which and the objects for which they work, and the reasons for their success in the political field.

[1] *The Century*, November, 1886.

The terms "machine" and "machine politician" are now undoubtedly used ordinarily in a reproachful sense; but it does not at all follow that this sense is always the right one. On the contrary, the machine is often a very powerful instrument for good; and a machine politician really desirous of doing honest work on behalf of the community is fifty times as useful an ally as is the average philanthropic outsider. Indeed, it is of course true that any political organization (and absolutely no good work can be done in politics without an organization) is a machine; and any man who perfects and uses this organization is himself, to a certain extent, a machine politician. In the rough, however, the feeling against machine politics and politicians is tolerably well justified by the facts, although this statement really reflects most severely upon the educated and honest people who largely hold themselves aloof from public life and show a curious incapacity for fulfilling their public duties.

The organizations that are commonly and distinctively known as machines are those belonging to the two great recognized parties, or to their factional subdivisions; and the reason why the word "machine" has come to be used, to a certain extent, as a term of opprobrium is to be found in the fact that these organizations are now run by the leaders very largely as business concerns to

benefit themselves and their followers, with little regard to the community at large. This is natural enough. The men having control and doing all the work have gradually come to have the same feeling about politics that other men have about the business of a merchant or manufacturer; it was too much to expect that if left entirely to themselves they would continue disinterestedly to work for the benefit of others. Many a machine politician who is to-day a most unwholesome influence in our politics is in private life quite as respectable as any one else; only he has forgotten that his business affects the state at large, and, regarding it as merely his own private concern, he has carried into it the same selfish spirit that actuates in business matters the majority of the average mercantile community. A merchant or manufacturer works his business, as a rule, purely for his own benefit, without any regard whatever for the community at large. The merchant uses all his influence for a low tariff, and the manufacturer is even more strenuously in favor of protection, not at all from any theory of abstract right, but because of self-interest. Each views such a political question as the tariff, not from the standpoint of how it will affect the nation as a whole, but merely from that of how it will affect him personally. If a community were in favor of protection, but nevertheless per-

mitted all the governmental machinery to fall into the hands of importing merchants, it would be small cause for wonder if the latter shaped the laws to suit themselves, and the chief blame, after all, would rest with the supine and lethargic majority which failed to have enough energy to take charge of their own affairs. Our machine politicians in actual life act in just this same way; their actions are very often dictated by selfish motives, with but little regard for the people at large, though, like the merchants, they often hold a very high standard of honor on certain points; they therefore need continually to be watched and opposed by those who wish to see good government. But, after all, it is hardly to be wondered at that they abuse power which is allowed to fall into their hands owing to the ignorance or timid indifference of those who by rights should themselves keep it.

In a society properly constituted for true democratic government—in a society such as that seen in many of our country towns, for example—machine rule is impossible. But in New York, as well as in most of our other great cities, the conditions favor the growth of ring or boss rule. The chief causes thus operating against good government are the moral and mental attitudes towards politics assumed by different sections of the voters. A large number of these are simply densely igno-

rant, and, of course, such are apt to fall under the influence of cunning leaders, and even if they do right it is by hazard merely. The criminal class in a great city is always of some size, while what may be called the potentially criminal class is still larger. Then there is a great class of laboring men, mostly of foreign birth or parentage, who at present both expect too much from legislation and yet at the same time realize too little how powerfully though indirectly they are affected by a bad or corrupt government. In many wards the overwhelming majority of the voters do not realize that heavy taxes fall ultimately upon them, and actually view with perfect complacency burdens laid by their representatives upon the tax-payers, and, if anything, approve of a hostile attitude towards the latter—having a vague feeling of animosity towards them as possessing more than their proper proportion of the world's good things, and sharing with most other human beings the capacity to bear with philosophic equanimity ills merely affecting one's neighbors. When powerfully roused on some financial, but still more on some sentimental, question, this same laboring class will throw its enormous and usually decisive weight into the scale which it believes inclines to the right; but its members are often curiously and cynically indifferent to charges of corruption against favorite heroes or demagogues, so long as

these charges do not imply betrayal of their own real or fancied interests. Thus an alderman or assemblyman representing certain wards may make as much money as he pleases out of corporations without seriously jeopardizing his standing with his constituents; but if he once, whether from honest or dishonest motives, stands by a corporation when the interests of the latter are supposed to conflict with those of "the people," it is all up with him. These voters are, moreover, very emotional; they value in a public man what we are accustomed to consider virtues only to be taken into account when estimating private character. Thus, if a man is open-handed and warm-hearted, they consider it as a fair offset to his being a little bit shaky when it comes to applying the eighth commandment to affairs of state. I have more than once heard the statement, "He is very liberal to the poor," advanced as a perfectly satisfactory answer to the charge that a certain public man was corrupt. Moreover, workingmen, whose lives are passed in one unceasing round of narrow and monotonous toil, are not unnaturally inclined to pay heed to the demagogues and professional labor advocates who promise if elected to try to pass laws to better their condition; they are hardly prepared to understand or approve the American doctrine of government, which is that the state cannot ordinarily attempt to better the

condition of a man or a set of men, but can merely see that no wrong is done him or them by any one else, and that all alike have a fair chance in the struggle for life—a struggle wherein, it may as well at once be freely though sadly acknowledged, very many are bound to fail, no matter how ideally perfect any given system of government may be.

Of course, it must be remembered that all these general statements are subject to an immense number of individual exceptions; there are tens of thousands of men who work with their hands for their daily bread and yet put into actual practice that sublime virtue of disinterested adherence to the right, even when it seems likely merely to benefit others, and those others better off than they themselves are; for they vote for honesty and cleanliness, in spite of great temptation to do the opposite, and in spite of their not seeing how any immediate benefit will result to themselves.

### *Reasons for the Neglect of Public Duties by Respectable Men in Easy Circumstances*

This class is composed of the great bulk of the men who range from well-to-do up to very rich; and of these the former generally and the latter almost universally neglect their political duties, for the most part rather pluming themselves upon their good conduct if they so much as vote on

election day. This largely comes from the tremendous wear and tension of life in our great cities. Moreover, the men of small means with us are usually men of domestic habits; and this very devotion to home, which is one of their chief virtues, leads them to neglect their public duties. They work hard as clerks, mechanics, small tradesmen, etc., all day long, and when they get home in the evening they dislike to go out. If they do go to a ward meeting they find themselves isolated and strangers both to the men whom they meet and to the matter on which they have to act; for in the city a man is quite as sure to know next to nothing about his neighbors as in the country he is to be intimately acquainted with them. In the country the people of a neighborhood, when they assemble in one of their local conventions, are already well acquainted and therefore able to act together with effect; whereas in the city, even if the ordinary citizens do come out, they are totally unacquainted with one another, and are as helplessly unable to oppose the disciplined ranks of the professional politicians as is the case with a mob of freshmen in one of our colleges when in danger of being hazed by the sophomores. Moreover, the pressure of competition in city life is so keen that men often have as much as they can do to attend to their own affairs, and really hardly have the leisure to look

after those of the public. The general tendency everywhere is toward the specialization of functions, and this holds good as well in politics as elsewhere.

The reputable private citizens of small means thus often neglect to attend to their public duties because to do so would perhaps interfere with their private business. This is bad enough, but the case is worse with the really wealthy, who still more generally neglect these same duties, partly because not to do so would interfere with their pleasure, and partly from a combination of other motives, all of them natural but none of them creditable. A successful merchant, well dressed, pompous, self-important, unused to any life outside of the counting-room, and accustomed because of his very success to be treated with deferential regard, as one who stands above the common run of humanity, naturally finds it very unpleasant to go to a caucus or a primary where he has to stand on an equal footing with his groom and day-laborers, and, indeed, may discover that the latter, thanks to their faculty for combination, are rated higher in the scale of political importance than he is himself. In all the large cities of the North the wealthier, or, as they would prefer to style themselves, the "upper" classes, tend distinctly towards the bourgeois type; and an individual in the bourgeois stage of develop-

ment, while honest, industrious, and virtuous, is also not unapt to be a miracle of timid and short-sighted selfishness. The commercial classes are only too likely to regard everything merely from the standpoint of "Does it pay?" and many a merchant does not take any part in politics because he is short-sighted enough to think that it will pay him better to attend purely to making money, and too selfish to be willing to undergo any trouble for the sake of abstract duty; while the younger men of this type are too much engrossed in their various social pleasures to be willing to give their time to anything else. It is also unfortunately true, especially throughout New England and the Middle States, that the general tendency among people of culture and high education has been to neglect and even to look down upon the rougher and manlier virtues, so that an advanced state of intellectual development is too often associated with a certain effeminacy of character. Our more intellectual men often shrink from the raw coarseness and the eager struggle of political life as if they were women. Now, however refined and virtuous a man may be, he is yet entirely out of place in the American body-politic unless he is himself of sufficiently coarse fibre and virile character to be more angered than hurt by an insult or injury; the timid good form a most useless as well as a most despicable portion of the

community. Again, when a man is heard objecting to taking part in politics because it is "low," he may be set down as either a fool or a coward: it would be quite as sensible for a militiaman to advance the same statement as an excuse for refusing to assist in quelling a riot. Many cultured men neglect their political duties simply because they are too delicate to have the element of "strike back" in their natures, and because they have an unmanly fear of being forced to stand up for their own rights when threatened with abuse or insult. Such are the conditions which give the machine men their chance; and they have been able to make the most possible out of this chance,—first, because of the perfection to which they have brought their machinery; and, second, because of the social character of their political organizations.

### *Organization and Work of the Machines*

The machinery of any one of our political bodies is always rather complicated; and its politicians invariably endeavor to keep it so, because, their time being wholly given to it, they are able to become perfectly familiar with all its workings, while the average outsider becomes more and more helpless in proportion as the organization is less and less simple. Besides some others of minor importance, there are at present in New

York three great political organizations, viz., those of the regular Republicans, of the County Democracy,[1] and of Tammany Hall, that of the last being perhaps the most perfect, viewed from a machine standpoint. Although with wide differences in detail, all these bodies are organized upon much the same general plan; and one description may be taken in the rough as applying to all. There is a large central committee, composed of numerous delegates from the different assembly districts, which decides upon the various questions affecting the party as a whole in the county and city; and then there are the various organizations in the assembly districts themselves, which are the real sources of strength, and with which alone it is necessary to deal. There are different rules for the admission to the various district primaries and caucuses of the voters belonging to the respective parties; but in almost every case the real work is done and the real power held by a small knot of men, who in turn pay a greater or less degree of fealty to a single boss.

The mere work to be done on election day and in preparing for it forms no slight task. There is an association in each assembly or election district, with its president, secretary, treasurer, executive committee, etc.; these call the primaries

[1] Since succeeded every year or two by some other anti-Tammany Democratic organization or organizations.

and caucuses, arrange the lists of the delegates to the various nominating conventions, raise funds for campaign purposes, and hold themselves in communication with their central party organizations. At the primaries in each assembly district a full set of delegates is chosen to nominate assemblymen and aldermen, while others are chosen to go to the State, county, and congressional conventions. Before election day many thousands of complete sets of the party ticket are printed, folded, and put together, or, as it is called, "bunched." A single bundle of these ballots is then sent to every voter in the district, while thousands are reserved for distribution at the polls. In every election precinct—there are probably twenty or thirty in each assembly district—a captain and from two to a dozen subordinates are appointed.[1] These have charge of the actual giving out of the ballots at the polls. On election day they are at their places long before the hour set for voting; each party has a wooden booth, looking a good deal like a sentry-box, covered over with flaming posters containing the names of their nominees, and the "workers" cluster around these as centres. Every voter as he approaches is certain to be offered a set of tickets; usually

[1] All this has been changed, vastly for the better, by the ballot-reform laws, under which the State distributes the printed ballots; and elections are now much more honest than formerly.

these sets are "straight," that is, contain all the nominees of one party, but frequently crooked work will be done, and some one candidate will get his own ballots bunched with the rest of those of the opposite party. Each captain of a district is generally paid a certain sum of money, greater or less according to his ability as a politician or according to his power of serving the boss or machine. Nominally this money goes in paying the subordinates and in what are vaguely termed "campaign expenses," but, as a matter of fact, it is in many instances simply pocketed by the recipient; indeed, very little of the large sums of money annually spent by candidates to bribe voters actually reaches the voters supposed to be bribed. The money thus furnished is procured either by subscriptions from rich outsiders or by assessments upon the candidates themselves; formerly much was also obtained from office-holders, but this is now prohibited by law. A great deal of money is also spent in advertising, placarding posters, paying for public meetings, and organizing and uniforming members to take part in some huge torchlight procession—this last particular form of spectacular enjoyment being one peculiarly dear to the average American political mind. Candidates for very lucrative positions are often assessed really huge sums, in order to pay for the extravagant methods by which our canvasses are

conducted. Before a legislative committee of which I was a member, the Register of New York County blandly testified under oath that he had forgotten whether his expenses during his canvass had been over or under fifty thousand dollars. It must be remembered that even now—and until recently the evil was very much greater—the rewards paid to certain public officials are out of all proportion to the services rendered; and in such cases the active managing politicians feel that they have a right to exact the heaviest possible toll from the candidate to help pay the army of hungry heelers who do their bidding. Thus, before the same committee the County Clerk testified that his income was very nearly eighty thousand a year, but with refreshing frankness admitted that his own position was practically merely that of a figure-head, and that all the work was done by his deputy on a small fixed salary. As the County Clerk's term is three years, he should nominally have received nearly a quarter of a million dollars; but as a matter of fact two thirds of the money probably went to the political organizations with which he was connected. The enormous emoluments of such officers are, of course, most effective in debauching politics. They bear no relation whatever to the trifling quantity of work done, and the chosen candidate readily recognizes what is the exact truth,—namely, that

the benefit of his service is expected to enure to his party allies and not to the citizens at large. Thus, one of the county officers who came before the above-mentioned committee testified with a naive openness which was appalling, in answer to what was believed to be a purely formal question as to whether he performed his public duties faithfully, that he did so perform them whenever they did not conflict with his political duties!—meaning thereby, as he explained, attending to his local organizations, seeing politicians, fixing primaries, bailing out those of his friends (apparently by no means few in number) who got hauled up before a justice of the peace, etc. This man's statements were valuable because, being a truthful person and of such dense ignorance that he was at first wholly unaware his testimony was in any way remarkable, he really tried to tell things as they were; and it had evidently never occurred to him that he was not expected by every one to do just as he had been doing,—that is, to draw a large salary for himself, to turn over a still larger fund to his party allies, and conscientiously to endeavor, as far as he could, by the free use of his time and influence, to satisfy the innumerable demands made upon him by the various small-fry politicians.[1]

[1] As a consequence of our investigation, the committee, of which I was chairman, succeeded in securing the enactment of laws which abolished these enormous salaries.

### "*Heelers*"

The "heelers," or "workers," who stand at the polls, and are paid in the way above described, form a large part of the rank and file composing each organization. There are, of course, scores of them in each assembly-district association, and, together with the almost equally numerous class of federal, State, or local paid office-holders (except in so far as these last have been cut out by the operations of the civil-service reform laws), they form the bulk of the men by whom the machine is run; the bosses of great and small degree chiefly merely oversee the work and supervise the deeds of their henchmen. The organization of a party in our city is really much like that of an army. There is one great central boss, assisted by some trusted and able lieutenants; these communicate with the different district bosses, whom they alternately bully and assist. The district boss in turn has a number of half-subordinates, half-allies, under him; these latter choose the captains of the election districts, etc., and come into contact with the common heelers. The more stupid and ignorant the common heelers are, and the more implicitly they obey orders, the greater becomes the effectiveness of the machine. An ideal machine has for its officers men of marked force, cunning and unscrupulous, and for its common soldiers

men who may be either corrupt or moderately honest, but who must be of low intelligence. This is the reason why such a large proportion of the members of every political machine are recruited from the lower grades of the foreign population. These henchmen obey unhesitatingly the orders of their chiefs, both at the primary or caucus and on election day, receiving regular rewards for so doing, either in employment procured for them or else in money outright. Of course, it is by no means true that these men are all actuated merely by mercenary motives. The great majority entertain also a real feeling of allegiance towards the party to which they belong, or towards the political chief whose fortunes they follow; and many work entirely without pay and purely for what they believe to be right. Indeed, an experienced politician always greatly prefers to have under him men whose hearts are in their work and upon whose unbribed devotion he can rely; but, unfortunately, he finds in most cases that their exertions have to be seconded by others which are prompted by motives far more mixed.

All of these men, whether paid or not, make a business of political life and are thoroughly at home among the obscure intrigues that go to make up so much of it; and, consequently, they have quite as much the advantage when pitted against amateurs as regular soldiers have when

matched against militiamen. But their numbers, though absolutely large, are, relatively to the entire community, so small that some other cause must be taken into consideration in order to account for the commanding position occupied by the machine and the machine politicians in public life. This other determining cause is to be found in the fact that all these machine associations have a social as well as a political side, and that a large part of the political life of every leader or boss is also identical with his social life.

### *The Social Side of Machine Politics*

The political associations of the various districts are not organized merely at the approach of election day; on the contrary, they exist throughout the year, and for the greater part of the time are to a great extent merely social clubs. To a large number of the men who belong to them they are the chief social rallying-point. These men congregate in the association building in the evening to smoke, drink beer, and play cards, precisely as the wealthier men gather in the clubs whose purpose is avowedly social and not political—such as the Union, University, and Knickerbocker. Politics thus becomes a pleasure and relaxation as well as a serious pursuit. The different members of the same club or association become closely allied with one another, and able to

act together on occasions with unison and *esprit de corps;* and they will stand by one of their own number for reasons precisely homologous to those which make a member of one of the upper clubs support a fellow-member if the latter happens to run for office. "He is a gentleman, and shall have my vote," says the swell club man. "He's one of the boys, and I'm for him," replies the heeler from the district party association. In each case the feeling is social rather than political, but where the club man influences one vote the heeler controls ten. A rich merchant and a small tradesman alike find it merely a bore to attend the meetings of the local political club; it is to them an irksome duty which is shirked whenever possible. But to the small politicians and to the various workers and hangers-on, these meetings have a distinct social attraction, and the attendance is a matter of preference. They are in congenial society and in the place where by choice they spend their evenings, and where they bring their friends and associates; and naturally all the men so brought together gradually blend their social and political ties, and work with an effectiveness impossible to the outside citizens whose social instincts interfere, instead of coinciding with their political duties. If an ordinary citizen wishes to have a game of cards or a talk with some of his companions, he must keep away from the

local headquarters of his party; whereas, under similar circumstances, the professional politician must go there. The man who is fond of his home naturally prefers to stay there in the evenings rather than go out among the noisy club frequenters, whose pleasure it is to see each other at least weekly, and who spend their evenings discussing neither sport, business, nor scandal, as do other sections of the community, but the equally monotonous subject of ward politics.

The strength of our political organizations arises from their development as social bodies; many of the hardest workers in their ranks are neither office-holders nor yet paid henchmen, but merely members who have gradually learned to identify their fortunes with the party whose hall they have come to regard as the headquarters in which to spend the most agreeable of their leisure moments. Under the American system it is impossible for a man to accomplish anything by himself; he must associate himself with others and they must throw their weight together. This is just what the social functions of the political clubs enable their members to do. The great and rich society clubs are composed of men who are not apt to take much interest in politics anyhow, and never act as a body. The great effect produced by a social organization for political purposes is shown by the career of the Union League Club;

and equally striking proof can be seen by every man who attends a ward meeting. There is thus, however much to be regretted it may be, a constant tendency towards the concentration of political power in the hands of those men who by taste and education are fitted to enjoy the social side of the various political organizations.

### *The Liquor-Seller in Politics*

It is this that gives the liquor-sellers their enormous influence in politics. Preparatory to the general election of 1884, there were held in the various districts of New York ten hundred and seven primaries and political conventions of all parties, and of these no less than six hundred and thirty-three took place in liquor-saloons,—a showing that leaves small ground for wonder at the low average grade of the nominees. The reason for such a condition of things is perfectly evident: it is because the liquor-saloons are places of social resort for the same men who turn the local political organizations into social clubs. Bar-tenders form, perhaps, the nearest approach to a leisure class that we have at present on this side of the water. Naturally they are on semi-intimate terms with all who frequent their houses. There is no place where more gossip is talked than in bar-rooms, and much of this gossip is about politics,—that is, the politics of the ward, not of the

nation. The tariff and the silver question may be alluded to and civil-service reform may be incidentally damned, but the real interest comes in discussing the doings of the men with whom they are personally acquainted: why Billy So-and-so, the alderman, has quarrelled with his former chief supporter; whether "old man X" has really managed to fix the delegates to a given convention; the reason why one faction bolted at the last primary; and if it is true that a great down-town boss who has an intimate friend of opposite political faith running in an up-town district has forced the managers of his own party to put up a man of straw against him. The bar-keeper is a man of much local power, and is, of course, hail-fellow-well-met with his visitors, as he and they can be of mutual assistance to one another. Even if of different politics, their feelings towards each other are influenced purely by personal considerations; and, indeed, this is true of most of the smaller bosses as regards their dealings among themselves, for, as one of them once remarked to me with enigmatic truthfulness, "there are no politics in politics" of the lower sort—which, being interpreted, means that a professional politician is much less apt to be swayed by the fact of a man's being a Democrat or a Republican than he is by his being a personal friend or foe. The liquor-saloons thus become the social headquarters of

the little knots or cliques of men who take most interest in local political affairs; and by an easy transition they become the political headquarters when the time for preparing for the elections arrives; and, of course, the good-will of the owners of the places is thereby propitiated,—an important point with men striving to control every vote possible.

The local political clubs also become to a certain extent mutual benefit associations. The men in them become pretty intimate with one another; and in the event of one becoming ill, or from any other cause thrown out of employment, his fellow-members will very often combine to assist him through his troubles, and quite large sums are frequently raised for such a purpose. Of course, this forms an additional bond among the members, who become closely knit together by ties of companionship, self-interest, and mutual interdependence. Very many members of these associations come into them without any thought of advancing their own fortunes; they work very hard for their party, or, rather, for the local body bearing the party name, but they do it quite disinterestedly, and from a feeling akin to that which we often see make other men devote their time and money to advancing the interests of a yacht club or racing stable, although no immediate benefit can result therefrom to themselves. One such man I now

call to mind who is by no means well off, and is neither an office-seeker nor an office-holder, but who regularly every year spends about fifty dollars at election time for the success of the party, or rather the wing of the party, to which he belongs. He has a personal pride in seeing his pet candidates rolling up large majorities. Men of this stamp also naturally feel most enthusiasm for, or animosity against, the minor candidates with whom they are themselves acquainted. The names at the head of the ticket do not, to their minds, stand out with much individuality; and while such names usually command the normal party support, yet very often there is an infinitely keener rivalry among the smaller politicians over candidates for local offices. I remember, in 1880, a very ardent Democratic ward club, many of the members of which in the heat of a contest for an assemblyman coolly swapped off quite a number of votes for President in consideration of votes given to their candidates for the State Legislature; and, in 1885, in my own district, a local Republican club that had a member running for alderman, performed a precisely similar feat in relation to their party's candidate for governor. A Tammany State Senator openly announced in a public speech that it was of vastly more importance to Tammany to have one of her own men Mayor of New York than it was to have a Demo-

cratic President of the United States. Very many of the leaders of the rival organizations, who lack the boldness to make such a frankly cynical avowal of what their party feeling really amounts to, yet in practice, both as regards mayor and as regards all other local offices which are politically or pecuniarily of importance, act exactly on the theory enunciated by the Tammany statesman; and, as a consequence, in every great election not only is it necessary to have the mass of the voters waked up to the importance of the principles that are at stake, but, unfortunately, it is also necessary to see that the powerful local leaders are convinced that it will be to their own interest to be faithful to the party ticket. Often there will be intense rivalry between two associations or two minor bosses; and one may take up and the other oppose the cause of a candidate with an earnestness and hearty good-will arising by no means from any feeling for the man himself, but from the desire to score a triumph over the opposition. It not unfrequently happens that a perfectly good man, who would not knowingly suffer the least impropriety in the conduct of his canvass, is supported in some one district by a little knot of politicians of shady character, who have nothing in common with him at all, but who wish to beat a rival body that is opposing him, and who do not for a moment hesitate to use every

device, from bribery down, to accomplish their ends. A curious incident of this sort came to my knowledge while happening to inquire how a certain man became a Republican. It occurred a good many years ago, and, thanks to our election laws, it could not now be repeated in all its details; but affairs similar in kind occur at every election. I may preface it by stating that the man referred to, whom we will call X, ended by pushing himself up in the world, thanks to his own industry and integrity, and is now a well-to-do private citizen and as good a fellow as any one would wish to see. But at the time spoken of he was a young laborer, of Irish birth, working for his livelihood on the docks and associating with his Irish and American fellows. The district where he lived was overwhelmingly Democratic, and the contests were generally merely factional. One small politician, a saloon-keeper named Larry, who had a great deal of influence, used to enlist on election day, by pay and other compensation, the services of the gang of young fellows to which X belonged. On one occasion he failed to reward them for their work, and in other ways treated them so shabbily as to make them very angry, more especially X, who was their leader. There was no way to pay Larry off until the next election; but they determined to break his influence utterly then, and as the best method for doing this

they decided to "vote as far away from him" as possible, or, in other words, to strain every nerve to secure the election of all the candidates most opposed to those whom Larry favored. After due consultation, it was thought that this could be most surely done by supporting the Republican ticket. Most of the other bodies of young laborers, or, indeed, of young roughs, made common cause with X and his friends. Everything was kept very quiet until election day, neither Larry nor the few Republicans having an inkling of what was going on. It was a rough district, and usually the Republican booths were broken up and their ballot-distributers driven off early in the day; but on this occasion, to the speechless astonishment of everybody, things went just the other way. The Republican ballots were distributed most actively, the opposing workers were bribed, persuaded, or frightened away, all means fair and foul were tried, and finally there was almost a riot,—the outcome being that the Republicans actually obtained a majority in a district where they had never before polled ten per cent. of the total vote. Such a phenomenon attracted the attention of the big Republican leaders, who after some inquiry found it was due to X. To show their gratitude and to secure so useful an ally permanently (for this was before the days of civil-service reform), they procured

him a lucrative place in the New York Post-office; and he, in turn, being a man of natural parts, at once seized the opportunity, set to work to correct the defects of his early education, and is now what I have described him to be.

### *Boss Methods*

A politician who becomes an influential local leader or boss is, of course, always one with a genuine talent for intrigue and organization. He owes much of his power to the rewards he is able to dispense. Not only does he procure for his supporters positions in the service of the State or city,—as in the custom-house, sheriff's office, etc., —but he is also able to procure positions for many on horse railroads, the elevated roads, quarry works, etc. Great corporations are peculiarly subject to the attacks of demagogues, and they find it much to their interest to be on good terms with the leader of each district who controls the vote of the assemblyman and alderman; and therefore the former is pretty sure that a letter of recommendation from him on behalf of any applicant for work will receive most favorable consideration. The leader is also continually helping his henchmen out of difficulties, pecuniary and otherwise; he lends them a dollar or two now and then, helps out, when possible, such of their kinsmen as get into the clutches of the law, gets a

hold over such of them as have done wrong and are afraid of being exposed, and learns to mix judicious bullying with the rendering of service.

But, in addition to all this, the boss owes very much of his commanding influence to his social relations with various bodies of his constituents; and it is his work as well as his pleasure to keep up these relations. No *débutante* during her first winter in society has a more exacting round of social duties to perform than has a prominent ward politician. In every ward there are numerous organizations, primarily social in character, but capable of being turned to good account politically. The Amalgamated Hack-drivers' Union, the Hibernian Republican Club, the West Side Young Democrats, the Jefferson C. Mullin Picnic Association,—there are twenty such bodies as these in every district, and with, at any rate, the master spirits in each and all it is necessary for the boss to keep on terms of intimate and, indeed, rather boisterous friendship. When the Jefferson C. Mullin society goes on a picnic, the average citizen scrupulously avoids its neighborhood; but the boss goes, perhaps with his wife, and, moreover, enjoys himself heartily, and is hail-fellow-well-met with the rest of the picnickers, who, by the way, may be by no means bad fellows; and when election day comes round, the latter, in return, no matter to what party they

may nominally belong, enthusiastically support their friend and guest on social, not political, grounds. The boss knows every man in his district who can control any number of votes: an influential saloon-keeper, the owner of a large livery stable, the leader among a set of horse-car drivers, a foreman in a machine-shop who has a taste for politics,—with all alike he keeps up constant and friendly relations. Of course, this fact does not of itself make the boss a bad man; there are several such I could point out who are ten times over better fellows than are the mild-mannered scholars of timorous virtue who criticise them. But, on the whole, the qualities tending to make a man a successful local political leader under our present conditions are not apt to be qualities that make him serve the public honestly or disinterestedly; and in the lower wards, where there is a large vicious population, the condition of politics is often fairly appalling, and the boss of the dominant party is generally a man of grossly immoral public and private character, as any one can satisfy himself by examining the testimony taken by the last two or three legislative committees that have investigated the affairs of New York City. In some of these wards many of the social organizations with which the leaders are obliged to keep on good terms are composed of criminals, or of the relatives and associates

of criminals. The testimony mentioned above showed some strange things I will take at random a few instances that occur to me at the moment. There was one case of an assemblyman who served several terms in the Legislature, while his private business was to carry on corrupt negotiations between the Excise Commissioners and owners of low haunts who wished licenses. The president of a powerful semi-political association was by profession a burglar, the man who received the goods he stole was an alderman. Another alderman was elected while his hair was still short from a term in State Prison. A school trustee had been convicted of embezzlement and was the associate of criminals. A prominent official in the Police Department was interested in disreputable houses and gambling saloons, and was backed politically by their proprietors.

### *Beating the Machine*

In the better wards the difficulty comes in drilling a little sense and energy into decent people: they either do not care to combine or else refuse to learn how. In one district we did at one time and for a considerable period get control of affairs and elect a set of almost ideal delegates and candidates to the various nominating and legislative bodies, and in the end took an absolutely

commanding although temporary position in State and even in national politics.

This was done by the efforts of some twenty or thirty young fellows who devoted a large part of their time to thoroughly organizing and getting out the respectable vote. The moving spirits were all active, energetic men, with common sense, whose motives were perfectly disinterested. Some went in from principle; others, doubtless, from good-fellowship or sheer love of the excitement always attendant upon a political struggle. Our success was due to our absolute freedom from caste spirit. Among our chief workers were a Columbia College professor, a crack oarsman from the same institution, an Irish quarryman, a master carpenter, a rich young merchant, the owner of a small cigar store, the editor of a little German newspaper, and a couple of employees from the post-office and custom-house, who worked directly against their own seeming interests. One of our important committees was composed of a prominent member of a Jewish synagogue, of the son of a noted Presbyterian clergyman, and of a young Catholic lawyer. We won some quite remarkable triumphs, for the first time in New York politics carrying primaries against the machine, and as the result of our most successful struggle completely revolutionizing the State Convention held to send delegates to the National Repub-

lican Convention of 1884, and returning to that body, for the first and only time it was ever done a solid delegation of Independent Republicans. This was done, however, by sheer hard work on the part of a score or so of men; the mass of our good citizens, even after the victories which they had assisted in winning, understood nothing of how they were won. Many of them actually objected to organizing, apparently having a confused idea that we could always win by what one of their number called a "spontaneous uprising," to which a quiet young fellow in our camp grimly responded that he had done a good deal of political work in his day, but that he never in his life had worked so hard and so long as he did to get up the "spontaneous" movement in which we were then engaged.

### *Conclusions*

In conclusion, it may be accepted as a fact, however unpleasant, that if steady work and much attention to detail are required, ordinary citizens, to whom participation in politics is merely a disagreeable duty, will always be beaten by the organized army of politicians to whom it is both duty, business, and pleasure, and who are knit together and to outsiders by their social relations. On the other hand, average citizens do take a spasmodic interest in public affairs; and we should

therefore so shape our governmental system that the action required by the voters should be as simple and direct as possible, and should not need to be taken any more often than is necessary. Governmental power should be concentrated in the hands of a very few men, who would be so conspicuous that no citizen could help knowing all about them; and the elections should not come too frequently. Not one decent voter in ten will take the trouble annually to inform himself as to the character of the host of petty candidates to be balloted for, but he will be sure to know all about the mayor, comptroller, etc. It is not to his credit that we can only rely, and that without much certainty, upon his taking a spasmodic interest in the government that affects his own well-being; but such is the case, and accordingly we ought, as far as possible, to have a system requiring on his part intermittent and not sustained action.

## CHAPTER VII

### SIX YEARS OF CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM [1]

NO question of internal administration is so important to the United States as the question of civil-service reform, because the spoils system, which can only be supplanted through the agencies which have found expression in the act creating the Civil-service Commission, has been for seventy years the most potent of all the forces tending to bring about the degradation of our politics. No republic can permanently endure when its politics are corrupt and base; and the spoils system, the application in political life of the degrading doctrine that to the victor belong the spoils, produces corruption and degradation. The man who is in politics for the offices might just as well be in politics for the money he can get for his vote, so far as the general good is concerned. When the then Vice-President of the United States, Mr. Hendricks, said that he "wished to take the boys in out of the cold to warm their toes," thereby meaning that he wished to distribute offices among the more active heelers, to the rapturous enthusiasm of the latter, he uttered

[1] *Scribner's Magazine*, August, 1895.

a sentiment which was morally on the same plane with the wish to give "the boys" five dollars apiece all around for their votes, and fifty dollars apiece when they showed themselves sufficiently active in bullying, bribing, and cajoling other voters. Such a sentiment should bar any man from public life, and will bar him whenever the people grow to realize that the worst enemies of the Republic are the demagogue and the corruptionist. The spoils-monger and spoils-seeker invariably breed the bribe-taker and bribe-giver, the embezzler of public funds, and the corrupter of voters. Civil-service reform is not merely a movement to better the public service. It achieves this end, too; but its main purpose is to raise the tone of public life, and it is in this direction that its effects have been of incalculable good to the whole community.

For six years, from May, 1889, to May, 1895, I was a member of the National Civil-service Commission, and it seems to me to be of interest to show exactly what has been done to advance the law and what to hinder its advancement during these six years, and who have been the more prominent among its friends and foes. I wish to tell "the adventures of Philip on his way through the world," and show who robbed him, who helped him, and who passed him by. It would take too long to give the names of all our friends, and it is

not worth while to more than allude to most of our foes and to most of those who were indifferent to us; but a few of the names should be preserved and some record made of the fights that have been fought and won and of the way in which, by fits and starts, and with more than one set-back, the general advance has been made.

Of the Commission itself, little need be said. When I took office the only Commissioner was Mr. Charles Lyman of Connecticut, who resigned when I did. Honorable Hugh S. Thompson, ex-Governor of South Carolina, was made Commissioner at the same time that I was, and after serving for three years resigned. He was succeeded by Mr. George D. Johnston of Louisiana, who was removed by the President in November, 1893, being replaced by Mr. John R. Proctor, the former State Geologist of Kentucky, who is still serving. The Commission has never varied a hand's breadth from its course throughout this time; and Messrs. Thompson, Proctor, Lyman, and myself were always a unit in all important questions of policy and principle. Our aim was always to procure the extension of the classified service as rapidly as possible, and to see that the law was administered thoroughly and fairly. The Commission does not have the power that it should, and in many instances there have been violations or evasions of the law in particular bureaus or de-

partments which the Commission was not able to prevent. In every case, however, we made a resolute fight, and gave the widest publicity to the wrong-doing. Often, even where we have been unable to win the actual fight in which we were engaged, the fact of our having made it, and the further fact that we were ready to repeat it on provocation, has put a complete stop to the repetition of the offence. As a consequence, while there have been plenty of violations and evasions of the law, yet their proportion was really very small, taking into account the extent of the service. In the aggregate it is doubtful if one per cent. of all the employees have been dismissed for political reasons. In other words, where under the spoils system a hundred men would have been turned out, under the Civil-service Law, as administered under our supervision, ninety-nine men were kept in.

In the administration of the law very much depends upon the Commission. Good heads of departments and bureaus will administer it well anyhow; but not only the bad men, but also the large class of men who are weak rather than bad, are sure to administer the law poorly unless kept well up to the mark. The public should exercise a most careful scrutiny over the appointment and over the acts of Civil-service Commissioners, for there is no office the effectiveness of which de-

pends so much upon the way in which the man himself chooses to construe his duties. A Commissioner can keep within the letter of the law and do his routine work and yet accomplish absolutely nothing in the way of securing the observance of the law. The Commission, to do useful work, must be fearless and vigilant. It must actively interfere whenever wrong is done, and must take all the steps that can be taken to secure the punishment of the wrong-doer and to protect the employee threatened with molestation.

This course was consistently followed by the Commission throughout my connection with it. I was myself a Republican from the North. Messrs. Thompson and Proctor were from the South, and were both Democrats who had served in the Confederate armies; and it would be impossible for any one to desire as associates two public men with higher ideals of duty, or more resolute in their adherence to those ideals. It is unnecessary to say that in all our dealings there was no single instance wherein the politics of any person or the political significance of any action was so much as taken into account in any case that arose. The force of the Commission itself was all chosen through the competitive examinations, and included men of every party and from every section of the country; and I do not believe that in any public or private office of the size it

would be possible to find a more honest, efficient, and coherent body of workers.

From the beginning of the present system each President of the United States has been its friend, but no President has been a radical civil-service reformer. Presidents Arthur, Harrison, and Cleveland have all desired to see the service extended and to see the law well administered. No one of them has felt willing or able to do all that the reformers asked, or to pay much heed to their wishes save as regards that portion of the service to which the law actually applied. Each has been a sincere party man, who has felt strongly on such questions as those of the tariff, of finance, and of our foreign policy, and each has been obliged to conform more or less closely to the wishes of his party associates and fellow party leaders; and, of course, these party leaders, and the party politicians generally, wished the offices to be distributed as they had been ever since Andrew Jackson became President. In consequence, the offices outside the protection of the law have still been treated, under every administration, as patronage, to be disposed of in the interest of the dominant party. An occasional exception was made here and there. The postmaster at New York, a Republican, was retained by President Cleveland in his first administration, and the postmaster of Charleston, a Democrat, was retained by President

Harrison; but, with altogether insignificant exceptions, the great bulk of the non-classified places have been changed for political reasons by each administration, the office-holders politically opposed to the administration being supplanted or succeeded by political adherents of the administration.

Where the change has been complete it does not matter much whether it was made rapidly or slowly. Thus, the fourth-class postmasterships were looted more rapidly under the administration of President Harrison than under that of President Cleveland, and the consular service more rapidly under President Cleveland than under President Harrison; but the final result was the same in both cases. Indeed, I think that the brutality which accompanied the greater speed was in some ways of service to the country, for it directed attention to the iniquity and folly of the system, and emphasized, in the minds of decent citizens, the fact that appointments and removals for political reasons in places where the duties are wholly non-political cannot be defended by any man who looks at public affairs from the proper standpoint.

The advance has been made purely on two lines, that is, by better enforcement of the law, and by inclusion under the law, or under some system similar in its operations, of a portion of

the service previously administered in accordance with the spoils theory. Under President Arthur the first classification was made, which included fourteen thousand places. Under President Cleveland, during his first term, the limits of the classified service were extended by the inclusion of seven thousand additional places. During President Harrison's term the limit was extended by the inclusion of about eight thousand places; and hitherto during President Cleveland's second term, by the inclusion of some six thousand places; in addition to which the natural growth of the service has been such that the total number of offices now classified is over forty thousand. Moreover, the Secretary of the Navy under President Harrison, introduced into the navy yards a system of registration of laborers, which secures the end desired by the Commission; and Secretary Herbert has continued this system. It only rests, however, upon the will of the Secretary of the Navy; and as we cannot expect always to have secretaries as clear-sighted as Messrs. Tracy and Herbert, it is most desirable that this branch of the service should be put directly under the control of the Commission.

The Cabinet officers, though often not civil-service reformers to start with, usually become such before their terms of office expire. This was true, without exception, of all the Cabinet officers with

whom I was personally brought into contact while on the Commission. Moreover, from their position and their sense of responsibility they are certain to refrain from violating the law themselves and to try to secure at least a formal compliance with its demands on the part of their subordinates. In most cases it is necessary, however, to goad them continually to see that they do not allow their subordinates to evade the law; and it is very difficult to get either the President or the head of a department to punish these subordinates when they have evaded it. There is not much open violation of the law, because such violation can be reached through the courts; but in the small offices and small bureaus there is often a chance for an unscrupulous head of the office or bureau to persecute his subordinates who are politically opposed to him into resigning, or to trump up charges against them on which they can be dismissed. If this is done in a sufficient number of cases, men of the opposite political party think that it is useless to enter the examinations; and by staying out they leave the way clear for the offender to get precisely the men he wishes for the eligible registers. Cases like this continually occur, and the Commission has to be vigilant in detecting and exposing them, and in demanding their punishment by the head of the office. The offender always, of course, insists that he has been

misunderstood, and in most cases he can prepare quite a specious defence. As he is of the same political faith as the head of the department, and as he is certain to be backed by influential politicians, the head of the department is usually loath to act against him, and, if possible, will let him off with, at most, a warning not to repeat the offence. In some departments this kind of evasion has never been tolerated; and where the Commission has the force under its eye, as in the departments at Washington, the chance of injustice is minimized. Nevertheless, there have been considerable abuses of this kind, notably in the custom-houses and post-offices, throughout the time I have been at Washington. So far as the Post-office Department was concerned the abuses were more flagrant under President Harrison's Postmaster-General, Mr. Wanamaker; but in the Treasury Department they were more flagrant under President Cleveland's Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Carlisle.

Congress has control of the appropriations for the Commission, and as it cannot do its work without an ample appropriation the action of Congress is vital to its welfare. Many, even of the friends of the system in the country at large, are astonishingly ignorant of who the men are who have battled most effectively for the law and for good government in either the Senate or the Lower

House. It is not only necessary that a man shall be good and possess the desire to do decent things, but it is also necessary that he shall be courageous, practical, and efficient, if his work is to amount to anything. There is a good deal of rough-and-tumble fighting in Congress, as there is in all our political life, and a man is entirely out of place in it if he does not possess the virile qualities, and if he fails to show himself ready and able to hit back when assailed. Moreover, he must be alert, vigorous, and intelligent if he is going to make his work count. The friends of the Civil-service Law, like the friends of all other laws, would be in a bad way if they had to rely solely upon the backing of the timid good. During the last six years there have been, as there always are, a number of men in the House who believe in the Civil-service Law, and who vote for it if they understand the question and are present when it comes up, but who practically count for very little one way or the other, because they are timid or flighty, or are lacking in capacity for leadership or ability to see a point and to put it strongly before their associates.

There is need of further legislation to perfect and extend the law and the system; but Congress has never been willing seriously to consider a proposition looking to this extension. Bills to provide for the appointment of fourth-class post-

masters have been introduced by Senator Lodge and others, but have never come to anything. Indeed, but once has a measure of this kind been reported from committee and fought for in either House. This was in the last session of the Fifty-third Congress, when Senators Morgan and Lodge introduced bills to reform the consular service. They were referred to Senator Morgan's Committee on Foreign Affairs and were favorably reported. Senator Lodge made a vigorous fight for them in the Senate, but he received little support, and was defeated, Senator Gorman leading the opposition.

On the other hand, efforts to repeal the law, or to destroy it by new legislation, have uniformly been failures and have rarely gone beyond committee. Occasionally, in an appropriation bill or some other measure, an amendment will be slipped through, adding forty or fifty employees to the classified service, or providing that the law shall not apply to them; but nothing important has ever been done in this way. But once has there been a resolute attack made on the law by legislation. This was in the Fifty-third Congress, when Mr. Bynum of Indiana, introduced in the House, and Mr. Vilas of Wisconsin, pushed in the Senate, a bill to reinstate the Democratic railway mail clerks, turned out before the classification of the railway mail service in the early days of Mr. Harrison's administration.

The classification of the railway mail service was ordered by President Cleveland less than two months before the expiration of his first term of office as President. It was impossible for the Commission to prepare and hold the necessary examinations and establish eligible registers prior to May 1, 1889. President Harrison had been inaugurated on March 4th, and Postmaster-General Wanamaker permitted the spoilsmen to take advantage of the necessary delay and turn out half of the employees who were Democrats and replace them by Republicans. This was an outrageous act, deserving the severe condemnation it received; but it was perfectly legal. During the four years of Mr. Cleveland's first term a clean sweep was made of the railway mail service; the employees who were almost all Republicans were turned out and Democrats were put in their places. The result was utterly to demoralize the efficiency of the service. It had begun to recover from this when the change of administration took place in 1889. The time was too short to allow of a clean sweep, but the Republicans did all they could in two months and turned out half of the Democrats. The law then went into effect, and since that time there have been no more removals for partisan purposes in that service. It has now recovered from the demoralization into which it was thrown by the two political revolutions, and

has reached a higher standard of efficiency than ever before. What was done by the Republicans in this service was repeated, on a less scale, by the Democrats four years later in reference to the classification of the small free-delivery post-offices. This classification was ordered by President Harrison two months before his term of office expired; but in many of the offices it was impossible to hold examinations and prepare eligible registers until after the inauguration of President Cleveland, and in a number of cases the incoming postmasters, who were appointed prior to the time when the law went into effect, took advantage of the delay to make clean sweeps of their offices. In one of these offices, where the men were changed in a body, the new appointees hired the men whom they replaced, at $35 a month apiece, to teach them their duties; in itself a sufficient comment on the folly of the spoils system.

Mr. Bynum's bill provided for the reinstatement of the Democrats who were turned out by the Republicans just before the classification of the railway mail service. Of course such a bill was a mere partisan measure. There was no more reason for reinstating the Democrats thus turned out than for reinstating the Republicans who had been previously turned out that these same Democrats might get in, or for reinstating the Repub-

licans in the free-delivery offices who had been turned out just before these offices were classified. If the bill had been enacted into law it would have been a most serious blow to the whole system, for it would have put a premium upon legislation of the kind; and after every change of parties we should have seen the passing of laws to reinstate masses of Republicans or Democrats, as the case might be. This would have meant a return to the old system under a new form of procedure. Nevertheless, Mr. Bynum's bill received the solid support of his party. Not a Democratic vote was cast against it in the House, none even of the Massachusetts Democrats being recorded against it. In the Senate it was pushed by Mr. Vilas. By a piece of rather sharp parliamentary procedure he nearly got it through by unanimous consent. That it failed was owing entirely to the vigilance of Senator Lodge. Senator Vilas asked for the passage of the bill, on the ground that it was one of small importance, upon which his committee were agreed. When it was read the words "classified civil service" caught Senator Lodge's ear, and he insisted upon an explanation. On finding out what the bill was he at once objected to its consideration. Under this objection it could not then be considered. If it could have been brought to a vote it would undoubtedly have passed; but it was late in the session, the calen-

dars were crowded with bills, and it was impossible to get it up in its regular order. Another effort was made, and was again frustrated by Senator Lodge, and the bill then died a natural death.

In the final session of the Fifty-third Congress a little incident occurred which deserves to be related in full, not for its own importance, but because it affords an excellent example of the numerous cases which test the real efficiency of the friends of the reform in Congress. It emphasizes the need of having, to watch over the interests of the law, a man who is willing to fight, who knows the time to fight, and who knows how to fight. The secretary of the Commission was, in the original law of 1883, allowed a salary of $1600 a year. As the Commission's force and work have grown, the salary in successive appropriation bills for the last ten years has been provided for at the rate of $2000 a year. Many of the clerks under the secretary now receive $1800, so that it would be, of course, an absurdity to reduce him in salary below his subordinates. Scores of other officials of the Government, including, for instance, the President's private secretary, the First Assistant Postmaster-General, the First Assistant Secretary of State, etc., have had their salaries increased in successive appropriation bills over the sum originally provided, in precisely the same way that the

salary of the secretary of the Commission was increased. The Fifty-third Congress was Democratic, as was the President, Mr. Cleveland, and the secretary of the Commission was himself a Democrat, who had been appointed to the position by Mr. Cleveland during his first term as President. The rules of the House provide that there shall be no increase of salary beyond that provided in existing law in any appropriation bill. When the appropriation for the Civil-service Commission came up in the House, Mr. Breckinridge of Kentucky, made the point of order that to give $2000 to the secretary of the Commission was to increase his salary by $400 over that provided in the original law of 1883, and was therefore out of order. He also produced a list of twenty or thirty other officers, including the President's private secretary, the First Assistant Postmaster-General, etc., whose salaries were similarly increased. He withdrew his point of order as regards these persons, but adhered to it as regards the secretary of the Commission. The chairman of the Committee of the Whole, Mr. O'Neill of Massachusetts, sustained the point of order; and not one person made any objection or made any fight, and the bill was put through the House with the secretary's salary reduced.

Now, the point of order was probably ill taken anyhow. The existing law was and had been for

ten years that the salary was $2000. But, in any event, had there been a single Congressman alert to the situation and willing to make a fight, he could have stopped the whole movement by at once making a similiar point of order against the President's private secretary, against the First Assistant Postmaster-General, the Assistant Secretary of State, and all the others involved. The House would, of course, have refused to cut down the salaries of all of these officials, and a resolute man, willing to insist that they should all go or none, could have saved the salary of the secretary of the Civil-service Commission. There were plenty of men who would have done this if it had been pointed out to them; but no one did so, and Mr. Breckinridge's point of order was sustained and the salary of the secretary reduced by $400. When it got over to the Senate, however, the civil-service reformers had allies who needed but little coaching. In the first place, the sub-committee of the Committee on Appropriations, composed of Messrs. Teller, Cockrell, and Allison, to which the Civil-service Commission section of the Appropriation Bill was referred, restored the salary to $2000; but Senator Gorman succeeded in carrying, by a bare majority, the Appropriations Committee against it, and it was reported to the full Senate still at $1600. The minute it got into the Senate, however, Senator Lodge had a fair chance

at it, and it was known that he would receive ample support. All that he had to do was to show clearly the absolute folly of the provision thus put in by Mr. Breckinridge, and kept in by Mr. Gorman, and to make it evident that he intended to fight it resolutely. The opposition collapsed at once; the salary was put back at $2000, and the bill became a law in that form.

Whether bad legislation shall be choked and good legislation forwarded depends largely upon the composition of the committees on civil-service reform of the Senate and the Lower House. The make-up of these committees is consequently of great importance. They are charged with the duty of investigating complaints against the Commission, and it is of course very important that if ever the Commission becomes corrupt or inefficient its shortcomings should be unsparingly exposed in Congress. On the other hand, it is equally important that the falsity of untruthful charges advanced against it should be made public. In the Fifty-first, Fifty-second, and Fifty-third Congresses a good deal of work was done by the Civil-service Committee of the House, and none at all by the corresponding committee of the Senate. The three chairmen of the House committee were Mr. Lehlbach, Mr. Andrew, and Mr. De Forest. All three were able and conscientious men and staunch supporters of the law. The

chairman in the Fifty-second Congress, Mr. John F. Andrew, was throughout his whole term of service one of the ablest, most fearless, and most effective champions of the cause of the reform in the House. Among the other members of the committee, in different Congresses, who stood up valiantly for the reform, were Mr. Hopkins of Illinois, Mr. Butterworth of Ohio, Mr. Boatner of Louisiana, and Mr. Dargan and Mr. Brawley of South Carolina. Occasionally there have been on the committee members who were hostile to the reform, such as Mr. Alderson of West Virginia; but these have not been men carrying weight in the House. The men of intelligence and ability who once familiarize themselves with the workings of the system, as they are bound to do if they are on the committee, are sure to become its supporters. In both the Fifty-first and the Fifty-second Congresses charges were made against the Commission, and investigations were held into its actions and into the workings of the law by the House committee. In each case, in its report the committee not only heartily applauded the conduct of the Commission, but no less heartily approved the workings of the law, and submitted bills to increase the power of the Commission and to render the law still more wide-reaching and drastic. These bills, unfortunately, were never acted on in the House.

The main fight in each session comes on the Appropriation Bill. There is not the slightest danger that the law will be repealed, and there is not much danger that any President will suffer it to be so laxly administered as to deprive it of all value; though there is always need to keep a vigilant lookout for fear of such lax administration. The danger-point is in the appropriations. The first Civil-service Commission, established in the days of President Grant, was starved out by Congress refusing to appropriate for it. A hostile Congress could repeat the same course now; and, as a matter of fact, in every Congress resolute efforts are made by the champions of foul government and dishonest politics to cut off the Commission's supplies. The bolder men, who come from districts where little is known of the law, and where there is no adequate expression of intelligent and honest opinion on the subject, attack it openly. They are always joined by a number who make the attack covertly under some point of order, or because of a nominal desire for economy. These are quite as dangerous as the others and deserve exposure. Every man interested in decent government should keep an eye on his Congressman and see how he votes on the question of appropriations for the Commission.

The opposition to the reform is generally well led by skilled parliamentarians, and they fight with

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Henry Cabot Lodge

are inevitably driven, and in consequence they can be relied upon to give, if not what is needed, at least enough to prevent any retrogression. It is in the open House and in Committee of the Whole that the fight is waged. The most dangerous fight occurs in Committee of the Whole, for there the members do not vote by aye and no, and in consequence a mean politician who wishes ill to the law, but is afraid of his constituents, votes against it in committee, but does not dare to do so when the ayes and noes are called in the House. One result of this has been that more than once the whole appropriation has been stricken out in Committee of the Whole, and then voted back again by substantial majorities by the same men sitting in open House.

In the debate on the appropriation the whole question of the workings of the law is usually discussed, and those members who are opposed to it attack not only the law itself, but the Commission which administers it. The occasion is, therefore, invariably seized as an opportunity for a pitched battle between the friends and foes of the system, the former trying to secure such an increase of appropriation as will permit the Commission to extend its work, and the latter striving to abolish the law outright by refusing all appropriations. In the Fifty-first and Fifty-second Congresses, Mr. Lodge of Massachusetts led the fight

for the reform in the Lower House. He was supported by such party leaders as Messrs. Reed of Maine and McKinley of Ohio, among the Republicans; and Messrs. Wilson of West Virginia and Sayers of Texas among the Democrats. Among the other champions of the law on the floor of the House were Messrs. Hopkins and Butterworth, Mr. Greenhalge of Massachusetts, Mr. Henderson of Iowa, Messrs. Payne, Tracey, and Coombs of New York. I wish I had the space to chronicle the names of all and to give a complete list of those who voted for the law. Among the chief opponents of it were Messrs. Spinola of New York, Enloe of Tennessee, Stockdale of Mississippi, Grosvenor of Ohio, and Bowers of California. The task of the defenders of the law was, in one way easy, for they had no arguments to meet, the speeches of their adversaries being invariably divisible into mere declamation and direct misstatement of facts. In the Senate, Senators Hoar of Massachusetts, Allison of Iowa, Hawley of Connecticut, Wolcott of Colorado, Perkins of California, Cockrell of Missouri, and Butler of South Carolina always supported the Commission against unjust attack. Senator Gorman was naturally the chief leader of the assaults upon the Commission. Senators Harris, Plumb, Stewart, and Ingalls were among his allies.

In each session the net result of the fight was

an increase in the appropriation for the Commission. The most important increase was that obtained in the first session of the Fifty-third Congress. On this occasion Mr. Lodge was no longer in the House, having been elected to the Senate. The work of the Commission had grown so that it was impossible to perform it without a great increase of force; and it would have been impossible to have put into effect the extensions of the classified service had this increase not been allowed. In the House the Committee on Appropriations, of which Mr. Sayers was chairman, allowed the increase, but it was stricken out in the House itself after an acrimonious debate, in which the cause of the law was sustained by Messrs. Henderson and Hopkins, Mr. McCall of Massachusetts, Mr. Coombs, Mr. Crain of Texas, Mr. Storer of Ohio, and many others; while the spoils-mongers were led by Messrs. Stockdale and Williams of Mississippi, Pendelton of West Virginia, Fithian of Illinois, and others less important.

When the bill went over to the Senate, however, Mr. Lodge, well supported by Messrs. Allison, Cockrell, Wolcott, and Teller, had the provision for the increase of appropriation for the Commission restored and increased, thereby adding by one half to the efficiency of the Commission's work. Had it not been for this the Commission would have been quite unable to have undertaken

the extensions recently ordered by President Cleveland.

It is noteworthy that the men who have done most effective work for the law in Washington in the departments, and more especially in the House and Senate, are men of spotless character, who show by their whole course in public life that they are not only able and resolute, but also devoted to a high ideal. Much of what they have done has received little comment in public, because much of the work in committee and some of the work in the House, such as making or combating points of order, and pointing out the danger or merit of certain bills, is not of a kind readily understood or appreciated by an outsider; yet no men have deserved better of the country, for there is in American public life no one other cause so fruitful of harm to the body-politic as the spoils system, and the legislators and administrative officers who have done the best work toward its destruction merit a peculiar meed of praise from all well-wishers of the Republic.

I have spoken above of the good that would come from a thorough and intelligent knowledge as to who were the friends and who were the foes of the law in Washington. Departmental officers, the heads of bureaus, and, above all, the Commissioners themselves, should be carefully watched by all friends of the reform. They should be sup-

ported when they do well and condemned when they do ill; and attention should be called not only to what they do, but to what they fail to do. To an even greater extent, of course, this applies to the President. As regards the Senators and Congressmen, also, there is urgent need of careful supervision by the friends of the law. We need criticism by those who are unable to do their part in action; but the criticism, to be useful, must be both honest and intelligent, and the critics must remember that the system has its staunch friends and bitter foes among both party men and men of no party — among Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. Each Congressman should be made to feel that it is his duty to support the law, and that he will be held to account if he fails to support it. Especially is it necessary to concentrate effort in working for each step of reform. In legislative matters, for instance, there is need of increase of appropriations for the Commission, and there is a chance of putting through the bill to reform the consular service. This has received substantial backing in the Senate and has the support of the majority of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Instead of wasting effort by a diffuse support of eight or ten bills, it would be well to bend every energy to securing the passage of the Consular Bill; and to do this it is necessary to arouse not only the Civil-service Reform

Associations, but the Boards of Trade throughout the country, and to make the Congressmen and Senators feel individually the pressure from those of their constituents who are resolved no longer to tolerate the peculiarly gross manifestation of the spoils system which now obtains in the consular service, with its attendant discredit to the national honor abroad.

People sometimes grow a little down-hearted about the reform. When they feel in this mood it would be well for them to reflect on what has actually been gained in the past six years. By the inclusion of the railway mail service, the smaller free-delivery offices, the Indian School service, the Internal Revenue service, and other less important branches, the extent of the public service which is under the protection of the law has been more than doubled, and there are now nearly fifty thousand employees of the Federal Government who have been withdrawn from the degrading influences that rule under the spoils system. This of itself is a great success and a great advance, though, of course, it ought only to spur us on to renewed effort. In the fall of 1894, the people of the State of New York, by a popular vote, put into their constitution a provision providing for a merit system in the affairs of the State and its municipalities; and the following spring the great city of Chicago voted, by an over-

whelming majority, in favor of applying in its municipal affairs the advanced and radical Civil-service Reform Law, which had already passed the Illinois Legislature. Undoubtedly, after every success there comes a moment of reaction. The friends of the reform grow temporarily lukewarm, or, because it fails to secure everything they hoped, they neglect to lay proper stress upon all that it does secure. Yet, in spite of all rebuffs, in spite of all disappointments and oppositions, the growth of the principle of civil-service reform has been continually more rapid, and every year has taken us measurably nearer that ideal of pure and decent government which is dear to the heart of every honest American citizen.

# CHAPTER VIII

## ADMINISTERING THE NEW YORK POLICE FORCE[1]

IN New York, in the fall of 1894, Tammany Hall was overthrown by a coalition composed partly of the regular Republicans, partly of anti-Tammany Democrats, and partly of Independents. Under the latter head must be included a great many men who, in national politics, habitually act with one or the other of the two great parties, but who feel that in municipal politics good citizens should act independently. The tidal wave, which was running high against the Democratic party, was undoubtedly very influential in bringing about the anti-Tammany victory; but the chief factor in producing the result was the wide-spread anger and disgust felt by decent citizens at the corruption which, under the sway of Tammany, had honey-combed every department of the city government, but especially the police force. A few well-meaning people have at times tried to show that this corruption was not really so very great. In reality it would be difficult to overestimate the utter rottenness of many branches of the city administration. There were

[1] *Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1897.

a few honorable and high-minded Tammany officials, and there were a few bureaus which were administered with more or less efficiency, although dishonestly. But the corruption had become so wide-spread as seriously to impair the work of administration, and to bring us back within measurable distance of the days of Tweed.

The chief centre of corruption was the police department. No man not intimately acquainted with both the lower and humbler sides of New York life—for there is a wide distinction between the two—can realize how far this corruption extended. Except in rare instances, where prominent politicians made demands which could not be refused, both promotions and appointments towards the close of Tammany rule were made almost solely for money, and the prices were discussed with cynical frankness. There was a well-recognized tariff of charges, ranging from two or three hundred dollars for appointment as a patrolman, to twelve or fifteen thousand dollars for promotion to the position of captain. The money was reimbursed to those who paid it by an elaborate system of blackmail. This was chiefly carried on at the expense of gamblers, liquor-sellers, and keepers of disorderly houses; but every form of vice and crime contributed more or less, and a great many respectable people who were ignorant or timid were blackmailed

under pretence of forbidding or allowing them to violate obscure ordinances and the like. From top to bottom the New York police force was utterly demoralized by the gangrene of such a system, where venality and blackmail went hand in hand with the basest forms of low ward politics, and where the policeman, the ward politician, the liquor-seller, and the criminal alternately preyed on one another and helped one another to prey on the general public.

In May, 1895, I was made president of the newly appointed police board, whose duty it was to cut out the chief source of civic corruption in New York by cleansing the police department. The police board consisted of four members. All four of the new men were appointed by Mayor Strong, the reform mayor, who had taken office in January.

With me, was associated, as treasurer of the board, Mr. Avery D. Andrews. He was a Democrat and I a Republican, and there were questions of national politics on which we disagreed widely; but such questions could not enter into the administration of the New York police, if that administration was to be both honest and efficient; and as a matter of fact, during my two years' service, Mr. Andrews and I worked in absolute harmony on every important question of policy which arose. The prevention of blackmail and

corruption, the repression of crime and violence, safeguarding of life and property, securing honest elections, and rewarding efficient and punishing inefficient police service, are not, and cannot properly be made, questions of party difference. In other words, such a body as the police force of New York can be wisely and properly administered only upon a non-partisan basis, and both Mr. Andrews and myself were quite incapable of managing it on any other. There were many men who helped us in our work; and among them all, the man who helped us most, by advice and counsel, by stalwart, loyal friendship, and by ardent championship of all that was good against all that was evil, was Jacob A. Riis, the author of *How the Other Half Lives*.

Certain of the difficulties we had to face were merely those which confronted the entire reform administration in its management of the municipality. Many worthy people expected that this reform administration would work an absolute revolution, not merely in the government, but in the minds of the citizens as a whole; and felt vaguely that they had been cheated because there was not an immediate cleansing of every bad influence in civic or social life. Moreover, the different bodies forming the victorious coalition felt the pressure of conflicting interests and hopes. The mass of effective strength was given by the

Republican organization, and not only all the enrolled party workers, but a great number of well-meaning Republicans who had no personal interest at stake, expected the administration to be used to further the fortunes of their own party. Another great body of the administration's supporters took a diametrically opposite view, and believed that the administration should be administered without the least reference whatever to party. In theory they were quite right, and I cordially sympathized with them; but as a matter of fact the victory could not have been won by the votes of this class of people alone, and it was out of the question to put these theories into complete effect. Like all other men who actually try to do things instead of confining themselves to saying how they should be done, the members of the new city government were obliged to face the facts and to do the best they could in the effort to get some kind of good result out of the conflicting forces. They had to disregard party so far as was possible; and yet they could not afford to disregard all party connections so utterly as to bring the whole administration to grief.

In addition to these two large groups of supporters of the administration, there were other groups, also possessing influence who expected to receive recognition distinctly as Democrats, but as anti-Tammany Democrats; and such members of

any victorious coalition are always sure to overestimate their own services, and to feel ill-treated.

It is of course an easy thing to show on paper that the municipal administration should have been administered without the slightest reference to national party lines, and if the bulk of the people saw things with entire clearness the truth would seem so obvious as to need no demonstration. But as a matter of fact the bulk of the people who voted the new administration into power neither saw this nor realized it, and in politics, as in life generally, conditions must be faced as they are, and not as they ought to be. The regular Democratic organization, not only in the city but in the State, was completely under the dominion of Tammany Hall and its allies, and they fought us at every step with wholly unscrupulous hatred. In the State and the city alike the Democratic campaign was waged against the reform administration in New York. The Tammany officials who were still left in power in the city, headed by the comptroller, Mr. Fitch, did everything in their power to prevent the efficient administration of the government. The Democratic members of the Legislature acted as their faithful allies in all such efforts. Whatever was accomplished by the reform administration—and a very great deal was accomplished—was due to the action of the Republican majority in the constitutional convention,

and especially to the Republican Governor, Mr. Morton, and the Republican majority in the Legislature, who enacted laws giving to the newly chosen Mayor, Mr. Strong, the great powers necessary for properly administering his office. Without these laws the Mayor would have been very nearly powerless. He certainly could not have done a tenth part of what actually was done.

Now, of course, the Republican politicians who gave Mayor Strong all these powers, in the teeth of violent Democratic opposition to every law for the betterment of civic conditions in New York, ought not, under ideal conditions, to have expected the slightest reward. They should have been contented with showing the public that their only purpose was to serve the public, and that the Republican party wished no better reward than the consciousness of having done its duty by the State and the city. But as a whole they had not reached such a standard. There were some who had reached it; there were others who, though perfectly honest, and wishing to see good government prosper, yet felt that somehow it ought to be combined with party advantage of a tangible sort; and finally, there were yet others who were not honest at all and cared nothing for the victory unless it resulted in some way to their own personal advantage. In short, the problem presented was of the kind which usually is presented

when dealing with men as a mass. The Mayor and his administration had to keep in touch with the Republican party or they could have accomplished nothing; and on the other hand there was much that the Republican machine asked which they could not do, because a surrender on certain vital points meant the abandonment of the effort to obtain good administration.

The undesirability of breaking with the Republican organization was shown by what happened in the administration of the police department. This being the great centre of power was the especial object of the Republican machine leaders. Toward the close of Tammany rule, of the four police commissioners, two had been machine Republicans, whose actions were in no wise to be distinguished from those of their Tammany colleagues; and immediately after the new board was appointed to office the machine got through the Legislature the so-called bi-partisan or Lexow law, under which the department is at present administered; and a more foolish or vicious law was never enacted by any legislative body. It modelled the government of the police force somewhat on the lines of the Polish Parliament, and it was avowedly designed to make it difficult to get effective action. It provided for a four-headed board, so that it was difficult to get a majority anyhow; but, lest we should get such a majority,

it gave each member power to veto the actions of his colleagues in certain very important matters; and, lest we should do too much when we were unanimous, it provided that the chief, our nominal subordinate, should have entirely independent action in the most important matters, and should be practically irremovable, except for proved corruption; so that he was responsible to nobody. The Mayor was similarly hindered from removing any police commissioner, so that when one of our colleagues began obstructing the work of the board, and thwarting its effort to reform the force, the Mayor in vain strove to turn him out. In short, there was a complete divorce of power and responsibility, and it was exceedingly difficult either to do anything, or to place anywhere, the responsibility for not doing it.

If, by any reasonable concessions—if, indeed, by the performance of any act not incompatible with our oaths of office, we could have stood on good terms with the machine, we would certainly have made the effort, even at the cost of sacrificing many of our ideals; and in almost any other department we could probably have avoided a break, but in the police force such a compromise was not possible. What was demanded of us usually took some such form as the refusal to enforce certain laws, or the protection of certain law-breakers, or the promotion of the least fit men to positions

of high power and grave responsibility; and on such points it was not possible to yield. We were obliged to treat all questions that arose purely on their merits, without reference to the desires of the politicians. We went into this course with our eyes open, for we knew the trouble it would cause us personally, and, what was far more important, the way in which our efforts for reform would consequently be hampered. However, there was no alternative, and we had to abide by the result. We had counted the cost before we adopted our course, and we followed it resolutely to the end. We could not accomplish all that we should have liked to accomplish, for we were shackled by preposterous legislation, and by the opposition and intrigues of the basest machine politicians, which cost us the support, sometimes of one, and sometimes of both, of our colleagues. Nevertheless, the net result of our two years of work was that we did more to increase the efficiency and honesty of the police department than had ever previously been done in its history.

But a decent people will have to show by emphatic action that they are in the majority if they wish this result to be permanent; for under such a law as the "bi-partisan" law it is almost impossible to keep the department honest and efficient for any length of time; and the machine politicians, by their opposition outside the board, and by the

aid of any tool or ally whom they can get on the board, can always hamper and cripple the honest members of the board, no matter how resolute and able the latter may be, if they do not have an aroused and determined public opinion behind them.

Besides suffering, in aggravated form, from the difficulties which beset the course of the entire administration, the police board had to encounter —and honest and efficient police boards must always encounter—certain special and peculiar difficulties. It is not a pleasant thing to deal with criminals and purveyors of vice. It is very rough work, and it cannot always be done in a nice manner. The man with the night-stick, the man in the blue coat with the helmet, can keep order and repress open violence on the streets; but most kinds of crime and vice are ordinarily carried on furtively and by stealth—perhaps at night, perhaps behind closed doors. It is possible to reach them only by the employment of the man in plain clothes, the detective. Now the function of the detective is primarily that of the spy, and it is always easy to arouse feeling against a spy. It is absolutely necessary to employ him. Ninety per cent. of the most dangerous criminals and purveyors of vice cannot be reached in any other way. But the average citizen who does not think deeply fails to realize the necessity for any such employ-

ment. In a vague way he desires vice and crime put down; but, also in a vague way, he objects to the only possible means by which they can be put down. It is easy to mislead him into denouncing what is necessarily done in order to carry out the very policy for which he is clamoring. The Tammany officials of New York, headed by the Comptroller, made a systematic effort to excite public hostility against the police for their warfare on vice. The law-breaking liquor-seller, the keeper of disorderly houses, and the gambler, had been influential allies of Tammany, and head contributors to its campaign chest. Naturally, Tammany fought for them; and the effective way in which to carry on such a fight was to portray with gross exaggeration and misstatement the methods necessarily employed by every police force which honestly endeavors to do its work. The methods are unpleasant, just as the methods employed in any surgical operation are unpleasant; and the Tammany champions were able to arouse more or less feeling against the police board for precisely the same reason that a century ago it was easy to arouse what were called "doctors' mobs" against surgeons who cut up dead bodies. In neither case is the operation attractive, and it is one which readily lends itself to denunciation; but in both cases it is necessary if there is a real intention to get at the disease. Tammany, of course, found its

best allies in the sensational newspapers. Of all the forces that tend for evil in a great city like New York, probably none are so potent as the sensational papers. Until one has had experience with them it is difficult to realize the reckless indifference to truth or decency displayed by papers such as the two that have the largest circulation in New York City. Scandal forms the breath of the nostrils of such papers, and they are quite as ready to create as to describe it. To sustain law and order is humdrum, and does not readily lend itself to flaunting woodcuts; but if the editor will stoop, and make his subordinates stoop, to raking the gutters of human depravity, to upholding the wrong-doer, and furiously assailing what is upright and honest, he can make money, just as other types of pander make it. The man who is to do honorable work in any form of civic politics must make up his mind (and if he is a man of properly robust character he will make it up without difficulty) to treat the assaults of papers like these with absolute indifference, and to go his way unheeded. Indeed he will have to make up his mind to be criticised, sometimes justly, and more often unjustly, even by decent people; and he must not be so thin-skinned as to mind such criticism overmuch.

In administering the police force we found, as might be expected, that there was no need of

genius, nor indeed of any very unusual qualities. What was needed was the exercise of the plain, ordinary virtues, of a rather commonplace type, which all good citizens should be expected to possess. Common sense, common honesty, courage, energy, resolution, readiness to learn, and a desire to be as pleasant with everybody as was compatible with a strict performance of duty—these were the qualities most called for. We soon found that, in spite of the wide-spread corruption which had obtained in the New York police department, the bulk of the men were heartily desirous of being honest. There were some who were incurably dishonest, just as there were some who had remained decent in spite of terrific temptation and pressure; but the great mass came in between. Although not possessing the stamina to war against corruption when the odds seemed well-nigh hopeless, they were nevertheless heartily glad to be decent and to welcome the change to a system under which they were rewarded for doing well, and punished for doing ill.

Our methods for restoring order and discipline were simple, and indeed so were our methods for securing efficiency. We made frequent personal inspections, especially at night, turning up anywhere, at any time. We thus speedily got an idea of whom among our upper subordinates we could trust and whom we could not. We then proceeded

to punish those guilty of shortcomings, and to reward those who did well, refusing to pay any heed whatever in either case to anything except the man's own character and record. A very few of these promotions and dismissals sufficed to show our subordinates that at last they were dealing with superiors who meant what they said, and that the days of political "pull" were over while we had the power. The effect was immediate. The decent men took heart, and those who were not decent feared longer to offend. The morale of the entire force improved steadily.

A similar course was followed in reference to the relations between the police and citizens generally. There had formerly been much complaint of the brutal treatment by police of innocent citizens. This was stopped peremptorily by the simple expedient of dismissing from the force the first two or three men who were found guilty of brutality. On the other hand we made the force understand that in the event of any emergency requiring them to use their weapons against either a mob or an individual criminal, the police board backed them up without reservation. Our sympathy was for the friends, and not the foes, of order. If a mob threatened violence we were glad to have the mob hurt. If a criminal showed fight we expected the officer to use any weapon that was necessary to overcome him on the instant; and even, if it be-

came necessary, to take life. All that the board required was to be convinced that the necessity really existed. We did not possess a particle of that maudlin sympathy for the criminal, disorderly, and lawless classes which is such a particularly unhealthy sign of social development; and we were bound that the improvement in the fighting efficiency of the police should go hand in hand with the improvement in their moral tone.

To break up the system of blackmail and corruption was less easy. It was not at all difficult to protect decent people in their rights, and this was accomplished at once. But the criminal who is blackmailed has a direct interest in paying the blackmailer, and it is not easy to get information about it. Nevertheless, we put a complete stop to most of the blackmail by the simple process of rigorously enforcing the laws, not only against crime, but against vice.

It was the enforcement of the liquor law which caused most excitement. In New York we suffer from the altogether too common tendency to make any law which a certain section of the community wants, and then to allow that law to be more or less of a dead-letter if any other section of the community objects to it. The multiplication of laws by the Legislature, and their partial enforcement by the executive authorities, go hand in hand, and offer one of the many serious problems

with which we are confronted in striving to better civic conditions. New York State felt that liquor should not be sold on Sunday. The larger part of New York City wished to drink liquor on Sunday. Any man who studies the social condition of the poor knows that liquor works more ruin than any other one cause. He knows also, however, that it is simply impracticable to extirpate the habit entirely, and that to attempt too much often merely results in accomplishing too little; and he knows, moreover, that for a man alone to drink whiskey in a bar-room is one thing, and for men with their families to drink light wines or beer in respectable restaurants is quite a different thing. The average citizen, who does n't think at all, and the average politician of the baser sort, who only thinks about his own personal advantage, find it easiest to disregard these facts, and to pass a liquor law which will please the temperance people, and then trust to the police department to enforce it with such laxity as to please the intemperate.

The results of this pleasing system were evident in New York when our board came into power. The Sunday liquor law was by no means a dead-letter in New York City. On the contrary no less than eight thousand arrests for its violation had been made under the Tammany regime the year before we came in. It was very much alive; but

it was only executed against those who either had no political pull, or who refused to pay money. The liquor business does not stand on the same footing with other occupations. It always tends to produce criminality in the population at large, and law-breaking among the saloon-keepers themselves. It is absolutely necessary to supervise it rigidly, and impose restrictions upon the traffic. In large cities the traffic cannot be stopped; but the evils can at least be minimized.

In New York the saloon-keepers have always stood high among professional politicians. Nearly two thirds of the political leaders of Tammany Hall have, at one time or another, been in the liquor business. The saloon is the natural club and meeting-place for the ward heelers and leaders, and the bar-room politician is one of the most common and best recognized factors, in local political government. The saloon-keepers are always hand in glove with the professional politicians, and occupy towards them a position such as is not held by any other class of men. The influence they wield in local politics has always been very great, and until our board took office no man ever dared seriously to threaten them for their flagrant violations of the law. The powerful and influential saloon-keeper was glad to see his neighbors closed, for it gave him business. On the other hand, a corrupt police captain, or the

corrupt politician who controlled him, could always extort money from a saloon-keeper by threatening to close him and let his neighbor remain open. Gradually the greed of corrupt police officials and of corrupt politicians, grew by what it fed on, until they began to blackmail all but the very most influential liquor-sellers; and as liquor-sellers were very numerous, and the profits of the liquor business great, the amount collected was enormous.

The reputable saloon-keepers themselves found this condition of blackmail and political favoritism almost intolerable. The law which we found on the statute books had been put on by a Tammany Legislature three years before we took office. A couple of months after we took office, Mr. J. P. Smith, the editor of the liquor-dealers' organ, *The Wine and Spirit Gazette*, gave out the following interview, which is of such an extraordinary character, that I insert it almost in full:

"Governor Flower, as well as the Legislature of 1892, was elected upon distinct pledges that relief would be given by the Democratic party to the liquor-dealers, especially of the cities of the State. In accordance with this promise a Sunday-opening clause was inserted in the excise bill of 1892. Governor Flower then said that he could not approve the Sunday-opening clause; whereupon the

Liquor Dealers' Association, which had charge of the bill, struck the Sunday-opening clause out. After Governor Hill had been elected for the second term I had several interviews with him on that very subject. He told me: 'You know I am the friend of the liquor-dealers and will go to almost any length to help them and give them relief; but do not ask me to recommend to the Legislature the passage of the law opening the saloons on Sunday. I cannot do it, for it would ruin the Democratic party in the State.' He gave the same interview to various members of the State Liquor Dealers' Association, who waited upon him for the purpose of getting relief from the blackmail of the police, stating that the lack of having the Sunday question properly regulated was at the bottom of the trouble. Blackmail had been brought to such a state of perfection, and had become so oppressive to the liquor-dealers themselves, that they communicated first with Governor Hill and then with Mr. Croker. *The Wine and Spirit Gazette* had taken up the subject because of gross discrimination made by the police in the enforcement of the Sunday-closing law. The paper again and again called upon the police commissioners to either uniformly enforce the law or uniformly disregard it. A committee of the Central Association of Liquor Dealers of this city then took up the matter and called upon Police

Commissioner Martin.[1] *An agreement was then made between the leaders of Tammany Hall and the liquor-dealers, according to which the monthly blackmail paid to the police should be discontinued in return for political support.*[2] In other words, the retail dealers should bind themselves to solidly support the Tammany ticket in consideration of the discontinuance of the monthly blackmail by the police. This agreement was carried out. Now what was the consequence? If the liquor-dealer, after the monthly blackmail ceased, showed any signs of independence, the Tammany Hall district leader would give the tip to the police captain, and that man would be pulled and arrested on the following Sunday."

Continuing, Mr. Smith inveighed against the law, but said:

"The (present) police commissioners are honestly endeavoring to have the law impartially carried out. They are no respecters of persons. And our information from all classes of liquor-dealers is that the rich and the poor, the influential and the uninfluential, are required equally to obey the law."

There is really some difficulty in commenting upon the statements of this interview, statements which were never denied.

[1] My predecessor in the presidency of the police board.

[2] The italics are my own.

The law was not in the least a dead-letter; it was enforced, but it was corruptly and partially enforced. It was a prominent factor in the Tammany scheme of government. It afforded a most effective means for blackmailing a large portion of the liquor-sellers and for the wholesale corruption of the police department. The high Tammany officials and the police captains and patrolmen blackmailed and bullied the small liquor-sellers without a pull, and turned them into abject slaves of Tammany Hall. On the other hand, the wealthy and politically influential liquor-sellers controlled the police, and made or marred captains, sergeants, and patrolmen at their pleasure. In some of the precincts most of the saloons were closed; in others almost all were open. The rich and powerful liquor-seller violated the law at will, unless he had fallen under the ban of the police or the ward boss, when he was not allowed to violate it at all.

Under these circumstances the new police board had one of two courses to follow. We could either instruct the police to allow all the saloon-keepers to become law-breakers, or else we could instruct them to allow none to be law-breakers. We followed the latter course, because we had some regard for our oaths of office. For two or three months we had a regular fight, and on Sundays had to employ half the force to enforce the liquor

law; for the Tammany legislators had drawn the law so as to make it easy of enforcement for purposes of blackmail, but not easy of enforcement generally, certain provisions being deliberately inserted with the intention to make it difficult of universal execution. However, when once the liquor-sellers and their allies understood that we had not the slightest intention of being bullied, threatened, or cajoled out of following the course which we had laid down, resistance practically ceased. During the year after we took office the number of arrests for violation of the Sunday liquor law sank to about one half of what they had been during the last year of the Tammany rule; and yet the saloons were practically closed, whereas under Tammany most of them had been open. We adopted no new methods, save in so far as honesty could be called a new method. We did not enforce the law with unusual severity; we merely enforced it against the man with a pull, just as much as against the man without a pull. We refused to discriminate in favor of influential law-breakers. The professional politicians of low type, the liquor-sellers, the editors of some German newspapers, and the sensational press generally, attacked us with a ferocity which really verged on insanity.

We went our way without regarding this opposition, and gave a very wholesome lesson to the

effect that a law should not be put on the statute books if it was not meant to be enforced, and that even an excise law could be honestly enforced in New York if the public officials so desired. The rich brewers and liquor-sellers, who had made money hand over fist by violating the excise law with the corrupt connivance of the police, raved with anger, and every corrupt politician and newspaper in the city gave them clamorous assistance; but the poor man, and notably the poor man's wife and children, benefited very greatly by what we did. The hospital surgeons found that their Monday labors were lessened by nearly one half, owing to the startling diminution in cases of injury due to drunken brawls; the work of the magistrates who sat in the city courts on Monday for the trial of the offenders of the preceding twenty-four hours was correspondingly decreased; while many a tenement-house family spent Sunday in the country, because for the first time the head of the family could not use up his money in getting drunk. The one all-important element in good citizenship in our country is obedience to law, and nothing is more needed than the resolute enforcement of law. This we gave.

There was no species of mendacity to which our opponents did not resort in the effort to break us down in our purpose. For weeks they eagerly repeated the tale that the saloons were as wide

open as ever; but they finally abandoned this when the counsel for the Liquor Dealers' Association admitted in open court, at the time when we secured the conviction of thirty of his clients and thereby brought the fight to an end, that over nine tenths of the liquor-dealers had been rendered bankrupt because we had stopped that illegal trade which gave them the best portion of their revenue. They then took the line that by devoting our attention to enforcing the liquor law we permitted crime to increase. This, of course, offered a very congenial field for newspapers like the *World*, which exploited it to the utmost; all the more readily since the mere reiteration of the falsehood tended to encourage criminals, and so to make it not a falsehood. For a time the cry was not without influence, even with decent people, especially if they belonged to the class of the timid rich; but it simply was n't true, and so this bubble went down-stream with the others. For six or eight months the cry grew, first louder, then lower; and then it died away. A commentary upon its accuracy was furnished toward the end of our administration; for in February, 1897, the Judge who addressed the grand jury of the month was able to congratulate them upon the fact that there was at that time less crime in New York relatively to the population than ever before; and this held true for our two-years' service.

In reorganizing the force the board had to make, and did make, more promotions, more appointments, and more dismissals than had ever before been made in the same length of time. We were so hampered by the law that we were not able to dismiss many of the men whom we should have dismissed, but we did turn out two hundred men —more than four times as many as had ever been turned out in the same length of time before; all of them being dismissed after formal trial, and after having been given full opportunity to be heard in their own defence. We appointed about seventeen hundred men all told—again more than four times as many as ever before; for we were allowed a large increase of the police force by law. We made 130 promotions; more than had been made in the six preceding years.

All this work was done in strictest accord with what we have grown to speak of as the principles of civil-service reform. In making dismissals we paid heed merely to the man's efficiency and past record, refusing to consider outside pressure; under the old regime no policeman with sufficient influence behind him was ever dismissed, no matter what his offence. In making promotions we took into account not only the man's general record, his faithfulness, industry, and vigilance, but also his personal prowess as shown in any special feat of daring, whether in the arresting of criminals or

in the saving of life—for the police service is military in character, and we wished to encourage the military virtues. In making appointments we found that it was practicable to employ a system of rigid competitive examinations, which, as finally perfected, combined a very severe physical examination with a mental examination such as could be passed by any man who had attended one of our public schools. Of course, there was also a rigid investigation of character. Theorists have often sneered at civil-service reform as "impracticable"; and I am very far from asserting that written competitive examinations are always applicable, or that they may not sometimes be merely stop-gaps, used only because they are better than the methods of appointing through political endorsement; but most certainly the system worked admirably in the police department. We got the best lot of recruits for patrolmen that had ever been obtained in the history of the force, and we did just as well in our examinations for matrons and police surgeons. The uplifting of the force was very noticeable, both physically and mentally. The best men we got were those who had served for three years or so in the Army or Navy. Next to these came the railroad men. One noticeable feature of the work was that we greatly raised the proportion of native-born, until, of the last hundred appointed, ninety-four per cent. were Ameri-

cans by birth. Not once in a hundred times did we know the politics of the appointee, and we paid as little heed to this as to their religion.

Another of our important tasks was seeing that the elections were carried on honestly. Under the old Tammany rule the cheating was gross and flagrant, and the police were often deliberately used to facilitate fraudulent practices at the polls. This came about in part from the very low character of the men put in as election officers. By conducting a written examination of the latter, and supplementing this by a careful inquiry into their character, in which we invited any decent outsiders to assist, we very distinctly raised their calibre. To show how necessary our examinations were, I may mention that before each election held under us we were obliged to reject, for moral or mental shortcomings, over a thousand of the men whom the regular party organizations, exercising their legal rights, proposed as election officers. We then merely had to make the police thoroughly understand that their sole duty was to guarantee an honest election, and that they would be punished with the utmost rigor if they interfered with honest citizens on the one hand, or failed to prevent fraud and violence on the other. The result was that the elections of 1895 and 1896 were by far the most honest and orderly ever held in New York City.

There were a number of other ways in which we sought to reform the police force, less important, and nevertheless very important. We paid particular heed to putting a premium on specially meritorious conduct, by awarding certificates of honorable mention, and medals, where we were unable to promote. We introduced a system of pistol practice by which, for the first time, the policemen were brought to a reasonable standard of efficiency in handling their revolvers. The Bertillon system for the identification of criminals was introduced. A bicycle squad was organized with remarkable results, this squad speedily becoming a kind of *corps d'élite*, whose individual members distinguished themselves not only by their devotion to duty, but by repeated exhibitions of remarkable daring and skill. One important bit of reform was abolishing the tramp lodging-houses, which had originally been started in the police stations, in a spirit of unwise philanthropy. These tramp lodging-houses, not being properly supervised, were mere nurseries for pauperism and crime, tramps and loafers of every shade thronging to the city every winter to enjoy their benefits. We abolished them, a municipal lodging-house being substituted. Here all homeless wanderers were received, forced to bathe, given night-clothes before going to bed, and made to work next morning; and, in addition, they were

so closely supervised that habitual tramps and vagrants were speedily detected and apprehended.

There was a striking increase in the honesty of the force, and there was a like increase in its efficiency. When we took office it is not too much to say that the great majority of the citizens of New York were firmly convinced that no police force could be both honest and efficient. They felt it to be part of the necessary order of things that a policeman should be corrupt, and they were convinced that the most efficient way of warring against certain forms of crime—notably crimes against person and property—was by enlisting the service of other criminals, and of purveyors of vice generally, giving them immunity in return for their aid. Before we took power the ordinary purveyor of vice was allowed to ply his or her trade unmolested, partly in consideration of paying blackmail to the police, partly in consideration of giving information about any criminal who belonged to the unprotected classes. We at once broke up this whole business of blackmail and protection, and made war upon all criminals alike, instead of getting the assistance of half in warring on the other half. Nevertheless, so great was the improvement in the spirit of the force, that, although deprived of their former vicious allies, they actually did better work than ever before against those criminals who threatened life and

property. Relatively to the population, fewer crimes of violence occurred during our administration of the board than in any previous two years of the city's history in recent times; and the total number of arrests of criminals increased, while the number of cases in which no arrest followed the commission of crime decreased. The detective bureau nearly doubled the number of arrests made compared with the year before we took office; obtaining, moreover, 365 convictions of felons and 215 convictions for misdemeanors, as against 269 and 105 respectively for the previous year. At the same time every attempt at riot or disorder was summarily checked, and all gangs of violent criminals brought into immediate subjection; while on the other hand the immense mass meetings and political parades were handled with such care that not a single case of clubbing of an innocent citizen was reported.

The result of our labors was of value to the city, for we gave the citizens better protection than they had ever before received, and at the same time cut out the corruption which was eating away civic morality. We showed conclusively that it was possible to combine both honesty and efficiency in handling the police. We were attacked with the most bitter animosity by every sensational newspaper and every politician of the baser sort, not because of our shortcomings, but

because of what we did that was good. We enforced the laws as they were on the statute books, we broke up blackmail, we kept down the spirit of disorder, and repressed rascality, and we administered the force with an eye single to the welfare of the city. In doing this we encountered, as we had expected, the venomous opposition of all men whose interest it was that corruption should continue, or who were of such dull morality that they were not willing to see honesty triumph at the cost of strife.

END OF VOLUME I.

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